

LETTERS
AND
OBSERVATIONS,
WRITTEN
IN A SHORT TOUR
THROUGH
FRANCE AND ITALY.

BY A GENTLEMAN.

Mr Beckford, of Fonthill
[No. By Peter Beckford]

Forfan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.

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MDCCLXXXVI.

LETTERS

THE substance of several of the following letters and the observations contained in them, having been written to a particular friend, it was thought proper to revise them, in order to render them more amiable to those who would have a sketch of the writer's travels, and perhaps a deeper and more lasting impression on his own memory, of those countries which he had visited, and the countries he had seen.

As they were intended only for distribution among a few intimate friends, and no means for general circulation, they are only to be read by the indulgent eye of friendship.



N. B. The confusion in the dates is occasioned by the writer's having visited Naples before he had fully finished his chronicle at Rome, (which he did in his return); but as he thought it would be less intricate to his readers to place the description of Rome before that of Naples, he has inserted this inaccuracy, which will be excused.

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LETTERS

AND

OBSERVATIONS.

LETTER I.

AVIGNON, Jan. 1785.

My dear friend,

PREVIOUS to my departure from England I promised to give you some account of my travels; I now sit down to fulfil that promise. My desire of seeing foreign countries, and the curiosity that prompted me to gratify it, you are well acquainted with; nor are you a stranger to the motives that restrained me from gratifying it before.

I shall say but little about France; its customs and manners, its palaces and churches,

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are so well described already, the vicinity of its situation to our own country, the frequent intercourse with it in time of peace, will, I trust, be deemed a sufficient apology for my silence on that subject.

When I come to the extent of my excursion, I will then endeavour to give you, a faithful, tho' an imperfect account of what I see, and the observations I make. You must not expect elegance of style, or even accuracy of expression; candour is ever ready to overlook small faults, and the slightest appearance of merit is magnified when viewed through the partial medium of friendship. If my little narrative be not decorated with the splendor of novelty, or the pomp of description, I will venture to promise that you shall not be deceived by fiction, nor be offended by the violation of truth.

We embarked at Lyons in a Coche d'Eau, in order to sail down that celebrated river the Rhone, November 28. The first day proving foggy and hazy, the beauties of the prospect were interrupted by that unfortunate circumstance; however, the lofty mountains discovered their tops, which were very craggy and romantic.

romantic. The Chateaus of the Noblesse, intermixed with woods and vineyards, added not a little to embellish and enrich the scene.

We passed by the town of Vienne, delightfully situated on the banks of the river, which bears the marks of great antiquity. This place held no inconsiderable rank in the days of Julius Cæsar, who resided here some time, and made it his magazine for provisions and arms. We continued our course down the Rhone the following day, and the weather improved more favourable to the wishes of a traveller than it had the preceding day: for our eyes were now regaled with the enchanting view of scattered villages, vestiges of ancient Romans, craggy rocks, and a distant view of the mountains of Savoy, covered with everlasting snow. The Rhone, in many parts, is not so wide as the Thames, but the meandrings of the river are beautiful beyond description.

After three days sail down the Rhone, we arrived at Avignon, which is a large ill-built city, it contains few good streets, and the greater part of it is very narrow and inconvenient. It boasts of an handsome, tho' small cathedral, near which is the palace of the Vice

Legate, which is a decayed building, containing nothing worth a stranger's observation. In the cathedral there are some fine paintings, and a monument of Pope Clement VII. These buildings are situated on the rock adjoining to the town, from whence you have an extensive and diversified prospect, particularly of Mont Ventoux, esteemed the highest mountain in France, and perpetually covered with snow.

This city is surrounded with a wall, on the outside of which are planted rows of trees, and a walk is formed for the amusement of the inhabitants. There are ruins of an ancient stone bridge, over the Rhone, said to be built by St. Benezed, whose tomb is to be seen in the convent of the Celestines. The district on which Avignon stands was purchased by a Pope.

Philip the Fair, who was endowed with a bold and enterprising spirit, quarrelling with Boniface, paved the way for the removal of the Papal See to this place, and from this dissension may be dated the æra of the Papal Power in France.

On the death of Benedict XI. this Prince, by his artful intrigues in the Conclave, obtained the See of Rome for a French Prelate Bertrund de Got, Archbishop of Bourdeaux, who was accordingly elected to that high dignity on the 5th of June, 1305. The French Monarch, inflamed with the desire of revenge, insisted on the formal condemnation of Boniface, his old enemy, by the Court of Rome, the abolition of the order of Templars, and other concessions of great importance, which he could not reasonably expect from an Italian Pope. Hence he looked upon a French Pontiff in whose zeal and compliance he could confide, as necessary to the execution of his designs. Bertrand assumed the name of Clement V. and at the King's request remained in France, and removed the Papal Residence to Avignon, where it continued during the space of seventy years. This period the Italians call, by way of derision, the Babylonish Captivity. It is still under the jurisdiction of the Pope, and is governed by a Vice Legate, to whom I had the honour of being introduced. The benefices are disposed of by the Pope; and the Vice Legate, in conjunction with the council, have absolute power in criminal and civil cases. A certain order of monks, called

black penitents, have power to release one criminal in the year, and shelter him from capital punishment; and an order of females are entitled to a similar privilege.

My residence was rendered particularly agreeable by attending the diversions of the place, the connection I formed with the English families there, by an acquaintance I made with the Archdeacon of the Cathedral, an intelligent and respectable man, and by an introduction to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Dutchess of Cumberland, who at that time resided at Avignon, and with whom I had frequently the honour of supping.

This city contains about twenty-six thousand inhabitants, and it being under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, trade flourishes but little.

I thought a description of a city so renowned in history for an event which struck at the foundation of Papal Power, would be deemed interesting to an inquisitive mind, and I hope, for that reason, you will forgive my being so minute and particular.

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LETTER II.

AVIGNON, Feb. 1785.

My dear friend,

BEFORE I leave this place, I must not omit giving you some account of the curiosities which I visited in the neighbourhood.

At St. Remi, about fourteen miles distant from Avignon, two monuments of Roman antiquity claim the attention of the curious traveller, viz. a triumphal arch and mausoleum, situated about a mile from St. Remi. The learned are divided in opinion concerning the origin of them, but it is generally supposed, from the elegance of the architecture, that they were erected in the Augustan age. If I may be indulged in a conjecture on the subject, I own I am inclined to think, that the triumphal arch was erected in memory of some battle fought near the spot, and the mausoleum was intended to perpetuate the valour of two heroes who fell in the battle, the effigies of whom are placed on the top. The triumphal

arch has been repaired within this century, and time seems to have made but little impression on the mausoleum.

A few days afterwards I joined a party to visit the famous fountain of Vaucluse. The river takes its rise in this spot, and I think you would not pardon me, did I not enlarge a little in describing this romantic scene. About half a mile before you reach the village of Vaucluse, nothing is to be seen but rocks, precipices, and winding streams, which form a very picturesque appearance. When you arrive at the source, which is situated immediately under an immense clift, the water is seen gently rising to the surface, which forms a kind of bason, the middle of which is extremely deep, and said to be bottomless. From this bason the water falls with amazing rapidity, over a large chain of craggy rocks, for near five hundred yards, and then continues its course. In short, this appears to be one of the most striking objects in nature, and the learned naturalists suppose it to be the greatest source in Europe. In this sequestered spot, so favourable to love and poetry, did Petrarch fix his Parnassus, and celebrate the charms of the beautiful Laura.

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I have hitherto said nothing of the little village of Villeneuve, which is situated on the opposite side of the Rhone to Avignon, from whence (as the situation is elevated) you have a glorious prospect of the city of Avignon, the Rhone, and the neighbouring mountains, among which Mount Ventoux makes no contemptible figure.

During my stay at Avignon I also visited the city of Carpentra, a city under the Pope's jurisdiction, celebrated for a modern aqueduct of considerable extent, built about forty years ago, by a Bishop of the See. The city contains nothing very remarkable besides, except a library which is said to contain many curious books, manuscripts, medals, &c. &c.

Soon after this excursion we visited the ancient city of Nismes, and in our way thither stopped to inspect the remains of the famous Pont du Garde, situated on the river Gardone, which is also supposed to be coeval with the reign of Augustus. The amphitheatre, situated near the extremity of the city, boasts also to be of great antiquity, built in the reign of Antoninus Pius, and from an attention to the vast edifice, some idea may be formed of the mag-

magnificence of the antient Romans. The inhabitants have shamefully sullied the splendor of this illustrious monument of antiquity, by crowding the Arena with shabby buildings and mean cottages; a great reflection on their want of taste. The size of the stones used in the building (which were immense and well finished) could not fail to excite our astonishment and admiration. A heathen temple is to be seen also not far from the amphitheatre, called the Maison Quarrée, which is still in excellent preservation, and is now converted into a chapel. Nîmes contains about sixty thousand inhabitants, most of whom are Protestants, and the trade of the city is very flourishing. The public walks adjacent to the city are extremely beautiful, and ornamented with a superb fountain, and baths rebuilt after the ancient style.

Adieu for the present. The next letter I write you, will, I hope, be written from Rome.

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LETTER III.

ROME, March, 1785.

My dear friend,

IN my last letter I told you that I hoped to date my next from Rome: I am happy to inform you, that I arrived here the 22d instant, at midnight. The moon shining very brightly gave me an opportunity of seeing the dome of St. Peters at some miles distant. I fully purposed sleeping a post or two short of this celebrated city, in order to enter it by day light, but my hopes were defeated by the exorbitant demands of the host at one place, and by the want of accommodations at the other.

About four miles from Rome I passed by the tomb of Nero, close by the road side: nothing remarkable in its structure or form claiming my notice, I proceeded on my journey.

The gates of Rome being shut caused some delay, but after a few minutes an officer opened

opened them to us, and would have examined my trunk, and detained my carriage till the next morning, had not I availed myself of an expedient frequently resorted to on such occasions, by giving him an extraordinary fee.

Having taken no previous steps to procure a lodging before my arrival, the inns being crowded with guests, and the inhabitants retired to their repose, it seem'd but too probable that I should be obliged to spend the night in my carriage, a circumstance not very desirable to a weary traveller. After a disagreeable suspense for more than half an hour, we fortunately met with a Laquais de Place, who being unemployed at that time, offered his services, and immediately conducted us to one of the principal hotels, where we knocked for a considerable time, but in vain, for all were in a state of such insensibility, that even the noise we made (which was not inconsiderable) was insufficient to rouse them from their slumbers. Unwilling to make a riot, and unacquainted with the customs of the city, we thought it more prudent to desist and seek accommodations elsewhere: by the advice of our Laquais we therefore tried our fortune at a private house, where, altho' appearances at first were
very

very unpromising, we found, after ascending four pair of stairs, a good bed and a decent apartment, the former of which I gladly took possession of.

You will ask, I suppose, how I came to Rome, and be apt to express your surprize that I did not inform you of my route and voyage, before I introduced you to this once mistress of the world; I will then answer your queries, and I trust you will peruse the account of the difficulties I struggled with, and the disappointments I experienced, with a satisfaction which, I assure you, I did not feel at the time I encountered them!

After being detained at Nice three or four days by contrary winds, I embarked in a felucca hired at Antibes, for the purpose of conveying me to Genoa, for which I paid six louis d'ores and eighteen livres to the crew. I slept the first night at Languale, a small fishing town on the Mediterranean, which I was glad to quit early the next morning; but not being able to reach Genoa that same evening, on account of a calm, we were under the necessity of putting into Savona, a large town about ten leagues from Genoa. Having suffered

suffered extremely for two days by a sea sickness, I was resolved to proceed to Genoa by land over the mountains, and arrived there the same day I sat out. Owing to the violence of a tempest, my servant could not join me for two days, and I was not without feeling some serious apprehensions for the safety of my servant and my property.

Genoa has justly been stiled the city of palaces. The churches, and indeed the houses of the noblesse, are for the most part fronted with polished marble; the streets are spacious and convenient, and the public buildings superb. The magnificence of the new council hall, within the Doge's palace, exceeds all belief. During my stay there, I had the satisfaction of seeing the Doge sitting under a canopy of state, surrounded by his Senators, with whom he was transacting the affairs of state. The harbour is remarkably striking for its extent and beauty, and a noble light-house, situated on a rock near its entrance, does not a little contribute to enrich the scene.

The buildings in this city are remarkably lofty. I was at the *Grand Cenf*, and at the height of a hundred stairs from the level of the street,

street, and there was a complete story over me. The palaces in the *Rue de Balbi* and the *Rue Neuve* are fit for the reception of sovereign princes, both with respect to their size as well as the superb manner in which they are fitted up. The cathedral is built in stripes, with black and white marble, which gives it the appearance of second mourning. The manufactures of Genoa are chiefly velvets and damasks.

I greatly regret that my time was so limited as not to give me more leisure to examine and admire the magnificence of a city, which I believe has not its equal in Europe.

From Genoa I proceeded to Florence, but as my stay there was but one night, you must excuse my saying any thing about it till my return, when I shall certainly visit it, and endeavour to give you a short description of it. Having now brought you thus far on my road to Rome, I will give you some respite, and myself, for the present, and beg leave to subscribe myself

Yours.

P.S. I omitted to mention I passed through
Sienna,

Sienna, a pleasant city of Tuscany, a few posts from which is the beautiful lake of Bolsena. Next night I was badly accommodated at Aquapendente, and then arrived at Rome.

LETTER IV.

ROME, March, 1785.

My dear friend,

WITHIN sixteen hours after my arrival at Rome, I attended in the Pope's chapel, to see a grand function, and heard some of the finest voices in the world. Every one knows that on such occasions the chapel is decorated and dressed up to the best advantage, and the voices are selected from all parts of the ecclesiastical state to sing in this chapel. His Holiness was not present this day, tho' it was Wednesday in the holy week. On the following

ing day however, I attended again in the same chapel, and was witness to a grand ceremony, the Pope presiding in person, who was habited in a white robe, elegantly embroidered and loosely flowing. His person being graceful, tho' advanced nearly to the age of seventy, it added much to the magnificence of the ceremony, which continued some hours; after which they walked in grand and solemn procession to an adjacent chapel in the Vatican; the Cardinals and all the other ecclesiasticks superbly dressed, carrying each a wax taper in their hands, preceding his Holiness, who carried the consecrated host, under a richly ornamented canopy. When they arrived at the chapel before-mentioned they deposited the host, which remained there till Easter Sunday. The concourse of spectators on this occasion was so immense, that all my efforts to gain admission proved abortive. The next ceremony was performed in an apartment adjoining, where the Pope washed the feet of twelve poor pilgrims, cloathed in white flannel, who were all seated under a fine piece of tapestry representing the last supper. Crowded as I was, and tho' suffering great inconvenience from the heat, I was much affected by this appearance of humility. This is done annually, in

commemoration of our Saviour's washing the feet of his Disciples on the same night that he was betrayed. After the conclusion of this, the Pope waited on them in person at supper, in a different chapel; after which his Holiness appeared in the front of St. Peter's, in a balcony, and gave his benediction to the populace. But this exhibition is seen to greater advantage on Easter Sunday.

On the evening of the same day I attended at St. Peter's, to see the illuminated cross, which hangs suspended from the dome, and makes a very splendid appearance. Some priests at the same time expose certain sacred reliques to the admiring multitude, who at the instant of the exposure fall on their knees and cross themselves with the most profound adoration.

Having encountered no small fatigue from frequenting these ceremonies I did not visit St. Peter's any more till Easter Sunday, tho' I understood that the host was exposed on Good Friday. But on Easter Day I went early to St. Peter's, and heard the Pope celebrate high mass; the Cardinals, &c. were assembled, and adorned with the most superb vestments. The Pope

Pope appeared a second time at the balcony, and pronounced his benediction to at least forty thousand people, in the grand area, who fell on their knees and received it with every mark of humility and complacency; and a grand discharge of artillery from St. Angelo's Castle concluded the whole.

Altho' I was much struck with the splendor of these ceremonies, and the pomp of their worship, yet believe me, there is not the least danger of my becoming a profelyte to the Romish religion, and with all its simplicity, I prefer the Protestant form of worship, to the parade of their magnificent processions, the lustre of their tapers, and the incense of their altars.

But tho' I am now in the bosom of the Roman Catholick Church, yet I am happy to say that the present inhabitants of Rome, and indeed all the Catholicks with whom I had any intercourse, appear to be entirely divested of that persecuting and intolerant spirit which, on some occasions, distinguished the votaries of that religion. Nevertheless, tho' I cannot accede to the articles of their creed, there is no reason why I should

not admire both the architecture and the ornaments of their churches. The magnificent church of St. Peter is built on the site of the circus of Caligula, commonly called the circus of Nero, the bloody theatre of Christian persecution, where expiring martyrs sealed their faith with their blood; and death in the most horrid forms was divested of its terrors, by a lively hope of an immortal crown. The front of the church is of the Corinthian order, but appears to be extremely heavy, and seems to stand in need of the two towers at St. Paul's, to take off from the enormous extent of the edifice. The inside of this superb structure presents at one view, to the admiring traveller, a profusion of ornaments, paintings, sculpture, &c. and all so happily disposed and arranged, that the abundance does not cause the least confusion. It is true, all is not perfection in this church, but the few faults one observes are swallowed up in the excellence of the whole. It would be an endless task to enumerate every particular object to be found there, but I shall content myself with observing some of the most striking. Pope Urban VIII. removed that noble sheet of copper from the Pantheon, and also the brazen statues, with which he cast those admirable wreathed pillars

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belonging to the great altar. The eastern altar deserves particular notice; it is entirely of copper, and represents four Doctors of the church supporting St. Peter's chair, which is inclosed in an elegant case of the same metal.

The pictures in mosaic are curious beyond conception. It is not a new invention, tho' it has received considerable improvements of late years. It is worked somewhat like stucco, in a large stone frame, on which they lay a deep coat of mortar, and work the little pieces of mosaic (consisting of glass and mixed metal) into this mortar, which, when dry, is harder and more durable than any stone whatsoever. A large picture will employ nine men constantly for seven years. Many advantages attend this species of composition. Pictures composed of this can never want repair, unless a part of the building should fall on them. No damp can ever affect them. The colours, being all the natural pieces of stone, appear equally bright under water. These stone frames are fixed into the wall, and become part of the building. The colours being more vivid and lively than painting, a superficial observer might easily have been deceived, and mistaken them for the productions of the pencil.

pencil. There is a method of giving them a fine polish, by rubbing sand over the surface, which, when once obtained, is never lost; and were they not designedly broken, would defy even the depredations of time.

I examined minutely every part of the building, and ascended to the ball immediately under the cross. I could not avoid feeling a pleasing astonishment when I contemplated the immense extent of this building, which is allowed, by the learned, to be the largest pile ever erected under one roof. Solomon's temple would stand in the smallest isle.

Underneath St. Peter's is the antient church, where many curious pieces of sculpture and pictures in mosaic are to be seen: there lies James, who styled himself the third King of that name, whom we call the Pretender: many tombs of Saints, Popes, and Cardinals are also to be seen, which bear the marks of great antiquity. But, above all, I must not omit to mention the little chapel wherein the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul are deposited, with an hundred lamps constantly burning over them. As the many pieces of sculpture are
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particularized by various travellers, I shall not detain you any longer, than by wishing this faint sketch may give you some idea of this stupendous pile, I am, &c.

P. S. During two nights in the holy week I was greatly entertained with some fire works that were play'd off from St. Angelo's Castle.

LETTER V.

ROME.

My dear friend,

SOON after my arrival here I applied to Mr. Byres, a Cicerone, and principal Antiquarian in this celebrated city, by which means I joined a very agreeable party of my countrymen, who had retained that ingenious gentleman for a similar purpose.

He first conducted us to the Vatican, where we took a view of the different apartments, Raphael's Lodge, and his admirable historical paintings, also the famous Museum, containing an infinite variety of statues, &c. &c.

The present Pope has greatly added to the collection, by several purchases which he has lately made.

As it would be an impossibility for me to transmit to you an exact detail of all the curiosities in this choice repository, I shall content myself with mentioning those pieces of sculpture which appeared to me the most striking. The Apollo of Belvidere, the Laocoon, the Antinous; and a fine head of Jupiter Serapis, lately dug up by Mr. Hamilton, the Artist, at Adrian's Villa, near Tivoli, deserves particular notice, on account of the pensive dignity expressed in the countenance.

The library of the Vatican is immense, and contains a great number of curious manuscripts. They always exhibit to Englishmen the book said to be written by Henry VIII. on the seven sacraments, and some original letters written by him to Ann Boleyn; but it

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is well known that Cardinal Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was the author of the former production.

The palace of Monte Cavallo is most delightfully situated in a different part of the city, and tho' it cannot boast of so many curiosities, yet it claims the attention of the inquisitive traveller. Here are displayed the paintings of the best masters, some in tolerable preservation, others manifesting evident proofs of their having received considerable injury from the depredations of time. The apartments of this palace are by no means so large as those of the Vatican, but much more habitable, tho' his present Holiness chooses to reside at the latter, which has not been the residence of the Popes for near two hundred years.

The paintings in the little chapel have a great degree of merit, but to particularize every fine picture, and enlarge on their respective beauties, would be an endless task. Should you however wish for minute information on this subject, and your memory be extensive enough to contain such a fund of knowledge, I can easily refer you to many publications, both in French and English, which give a clear and
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circumstantial relation of all the different paintings, the subjects, and the names of the artists; but I prefer giving you a sketch of the most famous painters, with the different schools to which they belong, to a dry recital of the names of every individual master, and the times in which they flourished.

The art of painting revived in Tuscany by means of the Greek painters, who came over after the sack of Constantinople. Giotto and Cimabue were their best disciples; from them came Donatelli, Brunalinhi, Massacuo, and many others of great merit; afterwards Pietro Perugino, Andrea Mantegna, Gio. Bellini, Ghirlandaio, Antonio de Levi, &c. Raphael was scholar to P. Perugino, and is looked upon as the head of the Roman school. Andrea Mantegna was master to Corregio, the head of the Lombard school. Giovanni Bellini was master to Titian, and founder of the Venezian school: each of these having their different manners of representing objects. The Roman and Florentine schools represented them by their form, or lines. The Parma school by their masses, or light and shade; and the Venezian by their colour and hue. The heads of these three schools having carried

carried their respective parts of art to the greatest excellence or simplicity possible, have been always esteemed the greatest painters we ever had. Cotemporary with Raphael lived the great Michael Angelo, Fra. Bartolomeo, Leonardo da Vinci, Sabastian del Piombo, Andrea del Sarto, Luca d'Olanda, Alberto Durer, Holbein, &c. Raphael's scholars were Giulio Romano, Polidore, Francesco Penni, Perino del Vago, &c. Michael Angelo's were D. da Volterra, Georgio Vassari, Primaticcio, &c. Corregio's scholars were Parmegianino, Schidoni, and some others of inferior merit. The Venezian school, in the time of Titian, produced Giorgione de Castel Franco, Paolo Veronese, the Bassans, Tintoret, Schiavone, Marone di Padoa, &c. As these went off, Baroccio, Cav. d'Arpino, and Michael Angelo da Caravaggio flourished; about which time the great Lodovico Carrach founded the second Lombard school at Bologna, whose great aim was to unite the merits of the three primitive schools, but they principally formed themselves on that of Corregio. His scholars were his nephews Agostino and Hannibal Carrach. Hannibal's scholars were Dominichino, Guido, Guercino, Albano, Spagnolletti, Lanfrank, Mola, &c. At the same time lived at

Bologna,

Bologna, Cavedone, and several other great artists. Andrea Sacchi studied under Albano and Guido, and Luca Giordano under Spagnoletti. About this time Pietro da Cortona formed a school at Rome, from whence sprung Romannelli, Pietro Testa, Ciro Ferri, and others. The great Nicholas Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Salvator Rosa, and Gaspar Poussin flourished about the same time. Carlo Maratti was scholar to Andrea Sacchi; his disciples were Giuseppe Chiari, Pietro Paolo Bianchi, Massuui, Riuolini, lately dead. It is the remains of this school now going on at Rome. Rubens was the head of the Flemish school, the master of Vandyke and many other reputable artists. The French school has had La Seur, and Le Brun, who seems to be the master principally followed. The Spaniards, Murillo, Diego Velasquez, and several other good painters.

I remain, &c.

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LETTER VI.

ROME.

My dear friend,

THE Colonna palace, or palace of the Lord High Constable of Naples (who is a Representative of the Neapolitan Court in this city) contains a variety of paintings by Claude Lorrain, Pouffin, and Salvator Rosa. The apartments are superb, and claim the first rank in this city; the gardens, tho' small, are beautiful, and diversified by walks, statues, and fountains; but I was wonderfully struck with two immense blocks of wrought marble that were lying on the ground, and, according to my Cicerone's information, formerly belonged to the Temple of the Sun. At the end of my letter I will give you the dimensions. The churches of St. John of Lateran and St. Paul, without the gates, are very ancient; the former was built by Constantine the Great, tho' considerably enlarged by the Popes, his successors; the latter was erected by the succeeding Emperor. The noble columns of the interior
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part of the church were taken from the mausoleum of Hadrian, now the castle of St. Angelo. Surely this must be deemed a sacrilegious outrage, in the primitive Christians, to disturb the ashes of the dead, in order to get possession of the marble and granite, under which they were deposited. It is worthy of observation, that the church of St. Paul, which is immensely large, actually stands in the fields; a striking proof of the great population of the suburbs of ancient Rome, which the ingenious Mr. Byres asserts contained (together with the city) when at the height of its glory, between three and four millions of inhabitants. Writers however are divided in opinion respecting this matter, some making the number considerably greater, and others somewhat less.

The church of Sancta Maria Majora is a beautiful edifice, and contains several good paintings. I shall not attempt to enumerate them, or descant on their several beauties, for the reasons given in a former letter.

The pieces of oriental granite frequently dug up here are immense; one lately discovered near the Piazza del Popolo is now putting up at Monte Cavallo.

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The famous Cavalier Fontana erected the noble Granite Obelisk (about two hundred years ago) before St. Peter's Church; an achievement that required a greater exertion of the mechanical powers, than has been ever known since the days of the ancients. The Pope, ambitious of contributing as much as possible to the splendor and magnificence of St. Peter's, fixed on this spot for its erection, and the expence of the machinery employed in this great undertaking, amounted to the amazing sum of ten thousand pounds.

The mechanical powers applied to facilitate such arduous undertakings have long been lost to the world, and the stones of Stonehenge, which have long puzzled and perplexed the antiquarian, to account for their removal, are not to be compared with the immense pieces of oriental granite which were profusely scattered through the city of ancient Rome.

The quarries of Egypt were ransacked by several of their Emperors, for granite marble and porphyry, to adorn the mistress of the world, and many of the Emperors vied with their predecessors, in contributing to its elegance and splendor.

The

The castle of St. Angelo is a place of no strength; and tho' Clement, in the sixteenth century, fled from Colonna's troops with precipitation to it, as a place of refuge, it was immediately invested, and the Pope was soon obliged to demand a capitulation. In the apartments of this castle there are some fresco paintings, and some pieces of ancient sculpture. Here the poor Jesuits (who were all seized in one night) were confined: many died during their residence there, and a few survived till within these four years.

I am,

Yours.

P.S. The measures of the blocks of marble in the Colonna Gardens, which formed part of the entablature of the Temple of the Sun, are as follows:

The block, containing part of the architrave and frieze, is sixteen feet, three inches and half in length; its height is nine feet, eight inches and three quarters; its breadth is five feet, ten inches and three quarters.

The other block contains the cornish, with part of the angle of the frontispiece; its length

length is thirteen feet, six inches and half;
its breadth the same; its height is nine
feet, ten inches and half.

This is a well-ornamented corinthian entablature. The columns that supported it must have been seven feet diameter.

LETTER VII.

ROME, May, 1785.

My dear friend,

ALTHO' I have already given you some account of ceremonies and processions, yet I have still in reserve a description of a more splendid procession than any before mentioned in my preceding letters.

On the 26th of May, being the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, (called in the
D Romish

Romish calendar, Fete de Dieu) I hired a room near St. Peter's church, to accommodate Mr. Byres and myself, for the purpose of seeing the cavalcade pass by. The concourse assembled on this solemn occasion is better conceived than expressed. The first part of the procession consisted of the different orders of the Monks and Friars, their habits varying according to their respective orders, and their numbers being immense, both these circumstances contributed to attract the attention of the admiring multitude. Then followed the Canons of the several Cathedrals, in their proper dresses. After which came the Cardinals, in most superb vestments, and his Holiness the Pope (who was carried on a wooden frame on men's shoulders, kneeling to a little altar, on which the consecrated wafer was exposed to public view) brought up the rear. The whole street through which the cavalcade passed was covered with an awning, as a defence against the inclemency of the weather. So numerous were the wax lights displayed in this grand ceremony, that they warmed the very atmosphere.

To assist you in forming some judgment of the amazing length and extent of the procession,

tion, I shall only observe that almost two hours elapsed before it finally closed.

Among the infinite variety of curiosities preserved in the new Capitol, I shall only mention two pieces of sculpture, as pointed out by our Cicerone to be most worthy of observation. The Dying Gladiator is inimitable, and justly merits the encomiums so lavishly bestowed on it by Connoisseurs; the other is an ancient Sarcophagus (wherein a child was once deposited) the subject of which is truly affecting.

On the top, the infant is represented sleeping, holding poppies in his hand; on the front is a bas relief, in the centre of which Prometheus is represented as a sculptor, holding a child of clay in his hand, which he has just formed. Minerva, who stands near him, animates the child, by putting the soul (under the form of a butterfly) into its head. On one side of this group is represented the rise of life by a car drawn by four horses, and going up hill; on the other side is another car, drawn by two horses, and still going up hill, as the child did not arrive to the age of maturity. This car is represented as fallen backwards,

and immediately underneath, the child lies dead. A Cupid stands near him, turning down the torch of life, and over the child's face, the soul (under the form of a butterfly) is going off, which is again represented by a young female, or Psyche, retaining its butterfly's wings, and Mercury, who holds the child, is conducting him to the Elysian Fields.

Under the car drawn by four horses you see the Earth holding a cornucopia, and children playing about her. Near this is the Water, personified by an old man holding the rudder of a ship; and a Cupid and Psyche embracing, which is emblematical of the union between the soul and the body.—How much more beautiful were the emblems of the Ancients than those of the Moderns, who represent Death by a parcel of human bones hitched together called a skeleton! But a sleeping figure, a Cupid inverting the torch of life, with the car of life going down hill, and, above all, the immortal part, the soul, flying off in the form of a butterfly, is inexpressibly striking and elegant.

The Ancients knew how to make a skeleton, tho' it has been much doubted by many gentlemen

tlemen of the faculty. I particularly remarked, at Pompeia, a complete skeleton in mosaie, under a window. The judicious Mr. Byres observes, that there is more of the ancient mythology displayed on this sarcophagus than any thing of the kind he ever noticed before. He said, that he had some idea of an ancient pedestal preserved in the Villa Albani, on which something of the same kind was to be seen, but not so ample.

The learned and ingenious Mr. Spence says,
 " There might have been a great deal of good
 " sense (and perhaps something above good
 " sense) in the fixing on this emblem. At
 " least, nothing (says he) could, I think, point
 " out the survival and liberty of the soul, after
 " its separation from the body, in a stronger
 " and more argumentative manner, than an
 " animal, which is first a gross, heavy, creep-
 " ing insect, and which, after dropping its
 " slough, becomes (by an amazing change)
 " a light, airy, flying, free, and happy creature.
 " —The butterfly is generally used by the
 " Greek artists, as an emblem for the human
 " soul."

Vide Spence's Polymetis, Note 35.

I ought to say something of the Flavian Amphitheatre, so called because it was erected by three Emperors of the Flavian family. It occupied a space as large as the Salisbury Market-Place, and to prevent the common people from removing any more of the rubbish, one of the Popes thought proper to consecrate it. A cross is now erected in the centre, and a number of small altars around the arena. Notwithstanding a considerable part of the materials have been taken away, yet what remains sufficiently displays the Roman splendor. It is said, that Titus employed twelve thousand captive Jews in this great undertaking.

As my visits during my stay at Rome were confined to my countrymen, I do not think myself competent to enlarge on the manners of the people.

The pyramid of Caius Sextus, which is placed in the wall of the city, is a curious piece of architecture, and formerly contained the ashes of that Roman who died under the reign of Augustus. Our Ciccone informed us, that this spot was called the Protestant Burying Ground; and so indulgent is the present Government of Rome, that an English Protestant, dying

dying in this city, may, on proper application, be buried agreeable to the forms of the Church of England.

I am

Yours,

LETTER VIII.

Rome, May, 1785.

My dear friend,

ROME affords so large a field of entertainment to the curious traveller, so many objects are perpetually offering to arrest his attention, that you must pardon me if I add another letter to the foregoing, which will probably be the last that I shall date from this place.

The triumphal arches of Titus, Constantine, and Septimius Severus, are tolerably well preserved, having braved the attacks of time,

as well as the rude insults and outrages of barbarians. Our Cicero called our attention to the mixture of sculpture observable on the arch of Constantine. The Senate, ever willing to pay their court to the reigning Emperor, gave a striking proof of their meanness and adulation, by taking down the arch of one of the most illustrious of their Emperors (Trajan) and converting the materials to raise an arch to the memory of Constantine. In those ages, as well as the succeeding ones, flattery insinuated itself into the heart, and was ever prompt to flow from the tongue.

The sculpture executed under the reign of Trajan is excellent, but that performed in the time of Constantine is execrable. Hence it is extremely evident how much the arts declined within the space of one hundred and ninety years.

The extensive remains of the Golden House of Nero (called so from its extraordinary magnificence) were pointed out to us, out of which was taken the beautiful Temple of Peace, which was burnt by an Incendiary under the reign of Commodus. With this edifice perished all the sacred utensils appertaining to the Jewish

Jewish worship, which were there deposited by Titus Vespasian, after the destruction of Jerusalem. So furious were the flames, and so intense the heat, that it is recorded that streams of melted metal ran through many of the streets of Rome, mixed with the water, which the inhabitants in vain poured to impede the progress of the fire.

It is a fortunate circumstance for the curious, that the memorial of these holy vessels did not entirely perish in this dreadful conflagration, for on the triumphal arch of Titus there is a representation of the procession (in bas relief) carrying several of these utensils, viz. golden candlesticks, silver trumpets, the altar of incense, &c. &c. &c.

The columns of Trajan and Antoninus Pius are much to be admired for their sculpture and ornaments.

The triumphal bridge in ruins, near St. Angelo's Castle, is an object that cannot fail to strike any one who is the least conversant in the Roman history. This was the bridge over which every General marched into the city, to whom a triumph was decreed, either
for

for the conquest of a province, or for any other signal victory.

I shall now quit the subject of Rome; tho' extremely fruitful, and in my next letter shall give you some account of Tivoli.

P. S. Tho', my good friend, Rome contains ample amusement for the classical scholar and virtuoso, yet I cannot think it is an agreeable place to live in. The misery one sees at every corner of the streets, and, above all, a frightful custom of carrying the dead uncovered, takes off a great deal of the pleasure.

LETTER IX.

ROME, June, 1785.

My dear friend,

BEFORE I left this city I accompanied a party to Tivoli, which is twenty miles distant from Rome.

The day being very serene, proved propitious to our wishes, and gave us thereby an opportunity of seeing the beauties of the country to greater advantage.

In our way to Adrian's Villa we took a view of the sulphureous lakes, and the famous incrustations, so much spoken of by travellers.

The lakes are called Solfaterra, and smell so strongly of that mineral, that the traveller perceives it at some distance.

Mr. Byres, our Cicerone, remarked that floating islands, he supposed, would be a novel scene

scene to us; and then advancing to the lake, we discovered some of the guides floating on detached pieces of the bank, to our no small surprize and astonishment. This lake is fathomless, and supposed to be the mouth of a great gulf; it abounds with fixed air, which appeared very evidently by innumerable bubbles rising on the surface, occasioned by the guides disturbing the water with their poles. The incrustations formed by this lake are extremely curious: I picked up several pieces in order to form a better judgment of this natural curiosity; and my Cicerone observed, that what I had taken was an incrustation of reeds.

We now approached to Adrian's Villa, the ruins of which are very extensive; but it is imagined, that not only the palace of the Emperor, but the mansions of the principal Courtiers were on this spot, as the ruins occupy a space of near two miles. Our Cicerone took much pains to point out the different apartments, and their respective uses. The barracks allotted for the soldiers, the spacious colonnades, and the various temples and habitations here dispersed, gave us a very striking idea of the magnificence and splendor of the ancient Romans.

About

About two hundred years ago a vault was discovered amongst these ruins, containing a number of Egyptian statues, there deposited, as it is supposed by some zealous Heathens, to prevent their falling into the hands of the primitive Christians, and they are now carefully preserved in the Capitol of Rome.

From Adrian's Villa we pursued our route to Tivoli, where there was a wide field opened for the entertainment of the curious traveller. We were so unfortunate as to be able to devote a single day only to this romantic spot; tho' a much longer period was requisite to examine minutely the curiosities which nature and art had there so lavishly displayed.

Incrustations are also to be seen here, on the side of an immense precipice, which is called the Grotto of Neptune; so called from a vast torrent of water which gushes out from the bottom of the rock below.

We were all much struck with the impression of the wheel of a carriage left in the incrustation, which is supposed to be of great antiquity, and gives room to conjecture, that the construction of wheel carriages is of a more ancient date than what is generally imagined.

The

The Sybil's Temple is beautifully situated on the point of a rock, and presents a fine object to exercise the genius of a painter. And at Tivoli indeed many of the most celebrated artists studied. Here they derived many opportunities of improving their pencils; and to their attention to these wild and romantic scenes, may be ascribed some of those masterly strokes which are conspicuous in the painters of the Roman school.

The cascades which fall from under the remains of Mæcenas's Villa are wonderfully striking, and in their descent, meeting with the craggy rocks below, and falling with violent precipitation, the water is turned into a white froth, and by its continual motion has caused considerable excavations in the stony bottom.

To add to the beauty of this enchanting scene, we had a distant prospect of the city of Rome; and St. Peter's, rearing its proud head above the other buildings, seemed to look down with disdain on the surrounding country.

The prospects near this place are very captivating, and tho' travellers expatiate with rapture on the beauties here displayed, there

is no room to complain of exaggeration, or that they have sacrificed truth to fiction.

I rely on your candour, to excuse so long an intrusion on your patience, and I remain, &c.

LETTER X.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My good friend,

I ARRIVED at this magnificent city between six and seven in the evening of the 8th of this month, after a very tedious journey from Rome, by Voiture; a method of travelling recommended to me by my friend Mr. Jenkins the banker, as the post was not transferred to the new road.

I paid for a pair of mules to my carriage, to convey me to Naples in three days and three quarters, (a hundred and fifty miles) eight

eight sequins, besides a sequin and nine pauls for the Voiturier, who paid for my supper and bed two nights during the journey.

Perhaps a sketch of the road between this place and Rome may not be unacceptable to you.

I left the latter the 5th of April, early in the morning, and never experienced more dismal weather; it snow'd, rain'd, and hail'd the whole day, at the same time the air was extremely severe and cutting.

A little way out of Rome, on my left hand, I was much struck with the extensive remains of an aqueduct, which furnished the ancient city with water. My Cicerone observed before my departure, that Rome was originally supplied from thirteen aqueducts, tho' three are a sufficient number for the present inhabitants—one quite new, and the other two raised on old foundations.

About twelve miles farther I began to ascend the Alban Hill, and came on the ancient Via Appia, at a place called Frattouhia. This road was first made by Appius Claudius the censor

censor, improved by Julius Cæsar, and perfected at an immense expence by Trajan. It led from Rome to Brundisium.

Just before I entered Albano, I observed an ancient square tower on my left hand, thought by the learned to be the tomb, or rather the cenotaph of Pompey the Great, built by his wife, opposite to his Villa, which stood on the other side of the road. The modern Albano took its name from the Prætorian camp of Domitian's Villa.

In going out of Albano, there is, on the left hand, an ancient tomb, falsely called that of the Horatii and Curiatii. The prospect all about is most beautiful.

Genzano, through which I passed, was formerly Cynthiana, sacred to Diana. The whole composition of Mons Albanus is volcanic substance, but we have no mention in history of any volcano there.

Veletri is famous for the birth place of Augustus. From hence there is a noble view of the Pontine Marshes, and the Circean Promontory, or Monte Circillo.

At the Torre de tu Ponte I came upon the new road, and the canal made by the present Pope to drain the marsh. From this spot, to the place where the canal enters the sea near Terracina, is twenty-three miles. The declivity is forty-eight Roman palms, which is full eighteen inches English, each mile. To facilitate the working on the canal, the great body of water is carried off by a temporary channel, and enters, at present, near the Ponte Maggiore; a canal is to be carried from that bridge to Terracina, for the conveniency of trade. There are several ancient mile-stones and bridges, built by Trajan, remaining; as also some ruins of Foro Appia and Meso.

At Terracina, formerly Anzur, a principal city of the Volsci, I slept one night; about nine miles from which are the remains of a temple of Jupiter.

A little beyond Terracina, a great height of rock is cut away, to continue the Via Appia between the sea and the mountains: it is about one hundred and twenty feet high, and marked at different distances with cyphers, from ten to one hundred and twenty, in a capital Roman character, on the face of the rock, which is
cut

cut perpendicularly, so that the cyphers on the top amount to a hundred and twenty. The learned are a good deal puzzled to find out the meaning of these cyphers. Some people imagine each number was intended to comprehend ten days work; but it is all conjecture.

Mola de Gaetta is a small town of the province of Lavoro, in the kingdom of Naples, built on the ruins of the ancient Formiæ, where Cicero had a country seat and was murdered by the Centurion Popilius Lænas.

I crossed the Garigliano, formerly the Liris. On its banks are some ruins of the ancient Minturnæ, and near it the remains of an aqueduct. In going down the hill from Capua, there is a fine view of Campagna Felix and Mount Vesuvius. The country round is rich and fertile.

The last day of my journey was something like the first, snow and hail excepted; but rain in great abundance, which made it near dark, Friday night, before I arrived at this famous city. After trying my fortune at two hotels, and being disappointed of accommodations at both, I set up my staff for six weeks at a small

inn exactly opposite the noble bay and the island of Capri, where I lodged and dined for about two guineas per week.

The beautiful city of Naples is situated in the bosom of a charming bay, in the form of a crescent towards the south. On the north are little fruitful hills, which rise insensibly into the Campania Felix. On the east is a large plain, which leads towards Mount Vesuvius; and on the west is a high hill, on which stands the castle of St. Elmo and the Carthusian Monastery. The ancient name of this city was Parthenope, from a sea nymph mentioned in fabulous history. It is the pleasantest place in the universe. The air is pure, serene, and healthful; it is scarce ever cold in winter, and in summer they have refreshing breezes, both from the mountains and the sea.

The neighbouring country is extremely rich, abounding with corn, wine, and oil, which are excellent in their kind. Their wines are extraordinary good, among which the lachryma christi is the most esteemed. But the people are no great drinkers.

The population of this city has greatly increased

creased within these few years. If we include the soldiers, and the numerous strangers, we may fairly reckon upwards of four hundred thousand inhabitants. Here are people of all nations—French, English, Germans, Russians, Greeks, &c. The streets are crowded from six o'clock in the morning till ten at night; nay, go out at what time you please, you always find a difficulty of passing; and, unless a stranger is very careful, there is great danger of his being rode over.

The streets, for the most part, are spacious and well built. The houses are of stone, lofty and uniform, with flat roofs, surrounded with balustrades, where the inhabitants solace themselves in summer evenings.

There are many squares, with beautiful fountains of different sizes, and a number of fine buildings, such as churches, convents, palaces, &c. but I purpose only speaking of the principal; therefore adieu for the present; you shall hear from me again soon.

LETTER XI.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My dear friend,

THE lovers of architecture, sculpture, and painting, may find ample amusement in examining the churches of the Spirito Santo, Santa Chiara, Sanazaro, St. Paulo Maggiore, San Gerolomini, the Cathedral, the Holy Apostles, the Annunciation, and St. James of the Spaniards. The Spirito Santo and the Annunciation, are specimens of the best architecture. The church of the Holy Apostles contains the universally-admired basso relievo of Fiar-ringo, representing a choir of angels, or a groupe of cupids. In St. James of the Spaniards is a fine monument of white marble, erected to the memory of Don Pedro de Toledo, Vice Roy of the Emperor Charles V. The church of Sanazaro contains a beautiful monument of white marble, which is erected to the memory of the Poet Sanazaro, a Neapolitan, who flourished in the sixteenth century: the
 sculpture

sculpture is very fine, and executed by a scholar of Michael Angelo. The church of St. Gerolomini contains two fine paintings by Guido, one representing St. Francis, the other our Saviour and St. John. Over the great entry is a fine piece in fresco, by Luca Giordano; the subject, Christ driving the buyers and sellers from the temple. The next is the Cathedral, which (except an antique vase of Egyptian basalt, with some basso relievos) contains nothing extraordinary. But the chapel of St. Januarius, within it has some fine paintings of Dominichino, Spagnolletto, and Lanfranc: the subjects of them are the life, miracles, and persecutions of St. Januarius. The riches of the ornaments of this chapel exceed all belief.

Besides these churches, there is the famous Carthusian Church and Convent above the town, from whence you have a glorious prospect of the city of Naples, the extensive bay, Mount Vesuvius, the island of Capri, &c.

The church contains many fine paintings, by Guido, Spagnoletto, &c. The riches of this convent are immense, which enables them to be very beneficent to the poor; thousands

of which description they feed every day at the gates of the convent. I was one morning a spectator of this awful fight.

The King's Palace at Naples (tho' very extensive, and of excellent architecture, by Cavalier Fontana, the same who erected the noble granite obelisk before St. Peter's Church) contains nothing remarkable.

A spacious building is now fitting up, in a most elegant taste, at the Studie Publici, to receive the antiquities of Herculaneum, Pompeia, and Stabia, which at present are in the museum of Portici, but will be removed, by royal authority, as soon as the building is completed. To which collection will likewise be added, the paintings, medals, &c. at Campo di Monte, one of the King's palaces, and also the Public Library.

2 Naples contains, besides, the above, many churches and convents of inferior note; to give a particular account of which, would lead me beyond the bounds of a letter.

Soon after my arrival I had the honour to dine with Sir William Hamilton, and met the Imperial
and

and Tuscan Ambassadors, besides a Portugeze and German Nobleman, Sir Thomas Wroughton, (to whom I had been previously introduced by my Cicerone, Mr. Clark) and another English gentleman. After dinner we were entertained with a private concert, in which Sir William bore a part; and in the evening he took Sir Thomas Wroughton and myself to the *Nobile Accademia*, where a ball is given on certain days, by the nobility, to their Sicilian Majesties, to whom we were both presented.

The King of Naples is a personable, well-looking man, about thirty-five years of age; and the Queen somewhat younger. His Majesty wore a plain suit, with an amazing cluster of brilliants fixed to his button-hole, the value of which, I think, could not be less than 30,000l. sterling.

Her Majesty, tho' not a perfect beauty, has, nevertheless, an agreeable, pleasing countenance. She was dressed in every respect like an English lady, with a number of diamonds in her hair, round her neck, and in different parts of her dress.

Their Sicilian Majesties have ever been distinguished

tinguished for the affability of their behaviour, and the civility with which they receive strangers. I now received a perpetual ticket, which will entitle me to admission whenever I chuse. There is generally a ball or concert in the course of the week, which will render my stay here very agreeable.

No one can be admitted to the *Nobile Accademia*, unless he is of noble birth, or has been presented.

Besides the above diversion, there are serious and comic operas, French and Italian plays, conversaziones, &c.

There is also the Royal Walk, a noble promenade against the sea, which has not been finished above four years, and is decorated with statues, fountains, &c. also a number of vines, which are contrived to run on wooden frames from one end to the other, and form the most beautiful aisles I ever saw. Here, for two months in the summer, a band of music plays every evening, when their Majesties, and their numerous attendance, enjoy the refreshing breezes from the sea. The aisles are splendidly illuminated, and houses for refreshment and

and gaming are situated at the entrance. In short, there is no place in Europe where the agreeable and useful are so happily united.

I remain, &c.

LETTER XII.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My dear friend,

I BELIEVE I have already told you that I had formed an acquaintance with Sir Thomas Wroughton, the English Minister, at the Court of Sweden, a very agreeable, friendly man, who, like myself, was led by curiosity into this part of the world, and who is well known to most of my connections. As we thought it would be more sociable to visit the curiosities together, we put ourselves under **M**r. Clark, a very intelligent, worthy man, who acted in the capacity of Cicerone.

The

The object which first attracted our notice was the palace of Campo di Monte, which is situated at a little distance from the town, upon a hill, which the name fully expresses. This palace is uninhabited, and tho' it was begun in the year 1738, yet it is still unfinished. Here you see the Parma collection of paintings, also medals, pieces of ancient fresco, &c. &c.

Among the numerous pictures in the different apartments, I shall only make mention of a few which appeared to me most striking. The celebrated Danae and the Venus and Adonis, by Titian; the portrait of Pope Leo X. with two Holy Families, by Raphael; an Interment and Pieta, of Annibal Caracci, also several other pieces by him and the other Caraccis. The marriage of St. Catharine, by Corregio, is a capital performance; and also a Holy Family and Magdalene, by Leonardo da Vinci; a famous Magdalene, and St. Peter, both portraits, but in separate pictures; a great number by Schidone, a very rare master, whose works are not to be seen any where but in this palace. It would take up a whole volume in folio, to give a full and exact account of the paintings and other curiosities in this palace.

I was

I was now amply rewarded for all the pains and trouble I had taken, all the fatigue I had undergone, all the impositions I had met with, all the difficulties I had encountered : I say, I was amply repaid, by the curiosities in this city and neighbourhood, and the civilities I received from Sir William Hamilton and others.

We next descended into the catacombs, which are very gloomy, subterraneous passages, worked out of a quarry, which consist of three stories, one above, the other about twenty feet wide, and fifteen high. The first and second we examined, but judged it highly improper to venture into the lowest, as it was very inconvenient and narrow. I was indeed very well satisfied with the two upper stories, for I think, in all my life, I never saw a more horrid place. They tell you some of these passages go several miles, but are choaked up with rubbish. I think there is no doubt but these excavations served for burying places to some large city, by the incredible number of graves of all sizes which are hewn out of the rock in every direction. Every now and then you see a sort of recess, which I suppose was the vault of some particular family. What is very remarkable,

markable, every one of these graves has been broke open, I imagine by the Barbarians; to search for treasure. In this dismal place did the primitive Christians retire in times of persecution, and celebrate divine worship. Some people imagine these caverns were made by the Christians themselves; but the idea is too ridiculous to gain the least credit; as if they could carry on a work of this nature unknown to their masters. Perhaps the primitive Christians might have made some little alteration, to enlarge a part for the conveniency of their worship; but as to their making them originally, it is really absurd to indulge such a supposition; for, in the first place, they bear the marks of such antiquity as appears to be antecedent to the persecutions under the Roman Emperors; and secondly, the primitive Christians would never have been so careful to make regular aisles, or so solicitous to cut away the stone in a uniform manner, if they only wanted a place to secrete themselves from their persecutors.

Nothing but a warm spirit of curiosity, aided by a good share of intrepidity, could induce persons to visit such scenes of horror, where

where broken tombs and human bones lie scattered in every corner.

I was very uneasy the whole time, for fear our guide should suffer the torch to go out through his carelessness, which would have been attended with this danger, that a retreat would have been almost impossible.

This would be an excellent place for a murder did not the King of Naples very prudently keep it locked up. Indeed there are particular advantages in this spot, for as soon as the bloody deed was committed, they might fit the body into one of the graves, which are mostly empty, and of different dimensions.

I remain, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My good friend,

WEDNESDAY, the 13th of April, we set off, about eight o'clock in the morning, towards Mount Vesuvius. We went in our carriage as far as the farther end of Portici, where we alighted, and took mules, which are always ready at a moment's warning, for the use of travellers.

The party consisted of Sir Thomas Wroughton, Mr. Clark, myself, and servant, besides guides.

We went a slow pace, passing over loose stones, and heaps of burnt earth, thrown out by the mountain at different times. The farther we advanced, the more parched and dry we found the ground, which is covered with calcined stones, and the channels of lava which it has from time to time discharged.

When

When we arrived at the steepest part of the mountain (sad to relate) the guides took away our mules, and told us we must clamber up as well as we could. Our friend Mr. Clark, recommended to us to take time; indeed it was very seasonable advice, as we had a very difficult task to accomplish.

We now slowly advanced, putting one foot before the other with great care and circumspection; for as the earth in many places is loose, there was great danger of falling.

Every now and then we stopped to take a view of the prospect, which all around us was most beautiful—the city of Naples, the charming bay, the island of Capri, (famous, or rather infamous, for the retreat of the profligate Tiberius) the bay of Baia, the promontory of Misenum, the islands of Ischia and Procida, Monte Barbaro, Monte Nuovo, &c. &c.

One of the guides now desired me to take hold of a handkerchief which was round his shoulder, as it would considerably lessen the fatigue: I did so, and found it had a good effect: Sir Thomas did the same, and with the help of our walking-sticks, which supported

F

our

our faltering steps, we went on tolerably well.

I now addreffed myfelf to Mr. Clark,—
 “I fuppose you are well acquainted with the
 “mountain;”—he answered, “Indeed, Sir, I
 “think I ought to be, for this is my ffty-fifth
 “time of clambering up.” I was quite
 aftonished; and ferioufly advised him to fet
 bounds to his curiofity, which had been amply
 gratified by fuch repeated vifits to the fummit;
 exhorting him, for the future, to aft by proxy
 in this laborious bufinefs. We now reached
 the top with a great deal of difficulty and fa-
 tigue. They generally allow an hour and half
 to accomplifh this laft task, but we performed
 it in lefs time.

I now found the fulphureous fmoke very
 difagreeable, as it produced a coughing; how-
 ever it foon went off, and I advanced with the
 reft of the party to the edge of the Old Crater,
 and looked in. We agreed we were now
 amply rewarded for all the pains and trouble
 we had taken in getting to the top.

The appearance of the interior part was, by
 no means, unlike an old entrenchment in ruins,
 fmoaking

smoaking in every part, in the Flat, or Ditch, and the sides of the Old Crater, as well as the New Cone, from the top of which proceeded a prodigious column of smoke.

But what struck me the most was, the beautiful yellow colours which appeared in the Fosse, and also along the sides of the Old Crater as well as the New, which are composed of sal ammoniac, sulphur, vitriol, nitre, &c. &c.

Mr. Clark now very properly pointed out to us the different torrents of lava which had run from the mountain within these thirty years. They appear not unlike plowed ground, and extend a considerable way into the country; some of them perhaps six or seven miles. I particularly observed there was not the least verdure on the lava which flowed from the mountain in 1760.

The following rough sketch of the Old and New Crater of Vesuvius may not be amiss to explain the present state of that Volcano; for an alteration always takes place after a great eruption, by the interior part falling into the gulph below.

I have not been able to procure the descriptive plate of the Mountains, which should be annexed to this page.

[68]

AA. Old Crater, about a mile in circumference.

B. The New Cone formed since the last dreadful eruption in 1779.

C. The spot where we dined.

D. The gap through which the lava now flows.

The small columns of smoke proceed from the Ditch and the bottom of the Old Crater and the New Cone.

The Ditch is about one hundred feet down from the highest part of the Old Crater, and the width of the Ditch, in some parts, may be about sixty feet.

We must remember, the Cone is not so high as the highest part of the Old Crater, tho' somewhat raised in the plate.

We ought also to observe, that smoke proceeds not only from the top of the Cone, but also from the bottom, and from the great Ditch, which is cracked in several places; also from the
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the sides and upper part of the Old Crater, and even a small quantity from the outside of the whole, which forms one prodigious body of smoke.

The stones that were thrown out during our stay (for the mountain was a little in eruption) fell precisely in the manner represented in the plate; that is, not beyond the Ditch, so that it was impossible to hurt us, who were not only beyond the Ditch, but without the Old Crater; however, we very sensibly found the sides of the Old Crater shake, immediately before each shower of stones, which was about every four minutes, and attended with a hissing, rushing noise; and once in particular, the shock was so great, that even the guides retreated several yards.

We now opened our bundle, which contained a cold turkey and a few other things, and made a very comfortable meal; after which we remained on the ground for some time, making our observation on the wonders that surrounded us: and when we had continued on the top about two hours, we very respectfully took off our hats and made each a low bow, returning the mountain our most grateful

acknowledgments for the entertainment it had afforded us; but above all, were we thankful that we had received no injury from the red hot stones it was pleased to discharge during our visit.

We now began to descend; and the upper part of the mountain being enormously steep, we went at a prodigious rate for about a mile. I had hold of one of the guide's hands, and ran faster than ever I did in my life, passing over large stone, beds of ashes, &c. &c.

I think there is some risk in descending, for if the party do not keep together, and those behind should inadvertently move a large stone, which was our case, some one might receive a very material injury: the velocity of the stone increased so fast, that we had but just time to make a lane for it to pass.

I must now mention a greater danger still, which we all very inconsiderately exposed ourselves to. In the flat between that part of the mountain called Vesuvius and Monte di Somma, was a considerable bed of lava in a fluid state; this, of course, attracted our notice, and we accordingly approached it to
make

make our observations, regardless of the prodigious heat which proceeded from it. We advanced nearer and nearer, till at last I was quite in pain for Mr. Clark, who was so close to it, as to be able to put a stick into the fiery matter, which would have been consumed in a few moments, had he not immediately taken it out, and withdrawn himself from the burning fiery furnace.

About a mile on the other side of this lava lived a hermit, whom strangers generally visited out of curiosity. Being unwilling to omit this ceremony, our Cicerone told us he thought it very possible to pass over about a hundred yards higher up, where the lava was quite hard. We agreed to the proposal, and providentially escaped unhurt; but we shuddered when we considered the risk we had run.

The matter we passed over felt not unlike a sheet of melted lead of about forty yards wide, a few minutes after it began to harden; for tho' hardened on top and incrusted, the incrustation was superficial, and the matter beneath was in a fluid state.

We were entertained with wine at the her-

mit's cell ; and after conversing about a quarter of an hour, we got on our mules, and returned to Portici, where we met our carriage, from whence we went to Naples, most heartily tired. We arrived at our hotels between six and seven in the evening.

The fatigues of this day's journey will not easily be erased from my memory. Had not the excessive labour necessary to accomplish the journey deterred me, I should have rejoiced to have made a second visit to the top of the mountain.

Many people have attempted to clamber up Mount Vesuvius, and have been obliged to give it up,

I remain, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My dear friend,

THE present system of volcanos is this, viz. it is imagined the immense track of land lying between the sea and the Appenine Mountains, including the whole of Campania Felix, being a space of about eight hundred or a thousand square miles, together with the islands of Capri, Nefita, the promontory of Misenum, the islands of Procida, Ischia, &c. have all been formed by volcanos; for, upon digging in different parts, they find nothing but *lava*, *scoria*, *tufa*, *pumice*, and other volcanic substances; whereas, upon opening the earth on the Appenines, and beyond, they see quite a different kind of stratum. From hence they conclude, that the sea formerly came as far as the Appenine Mountains, and these volcanos came originally out of the sea. Indeed, there has lately been a very striking instance of this nature, about two years ago, when a volcano rose out of the sea

sea near Iceland. Naples, therefore, is so far from being a country destroyed by volcanos, that it is a country considerably enlarged or created by volcanos.

Here I stop, not wishing to have any concern with the inferences that have been drawn; and indeed I think it is much better to be lost in wonder and astonishment, than to endeavour to account for things which are manifestly beyond our capacities. But such is the restless and enterprising spirit of mankind, that they must go to work to discover, if they can, how long all this has been forming; and recollecting that the face of the country is now nearly the same as it was in the time of the Romans, they are obliged to carry their researches into very remote antiquity; and when they come to make up their calculations of the time these volcanos have been forming, in the first place, and the length of time they have been extinguished, like the *Cañonico Recupero* mentioned by Brydone, they are forced to reject the Mosaic history of the creation, to account for the antiquity of their favourite mountain.

This subject has been treated in a masterly manner

manner by the judicious Sir William Hamilton, his Majesty's Minister at the Court of Naples, who has written many letters to the Royal Society on the nature and progress of volcanos.

It is generally imagined that Mount Vesuvius rose originally from the bottom of the sea; but the learned Padre del Torre (of whom Sir William Hamilton makes very honourable mention) is of a different opinion. This ingenious naturalist, after taking great pains to enquire into the phenomena of Vesuvius, and going through a long and scientific detail of the same, concludes in the following manner: "From these considerations I think it is clear, that Mount Vesuvius is coeval with the world, and was originally formed by the great Creator of all Things.*

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* On peut conclure évidemment de ces Observations que j'ai faites plusieurs fois pendant les années 1751, 1752, & 1753, sur ses couches naturelles, tant dans cette partie que dans plusieurs autres dont j'ai parlé que le Vésuve n'est pas, comme quelquesuns l'ont prétendu, une Montagne formée peu à peu sur la superficie de l'Atrio & du Vallon, par les différentes matié res qui sont sorties de l'abîme; mais qu'elle est aussi ancienne que le monde, & l'ouvrage du Créateur, comme toutes les autres Montagnes.

Extracted from the History of Vesuvius by Padre dell Torre.

As such eminent men differ in opinion, I trust you will excuse me if I forbear giving my sentiments on so deep and complicated a subject.

So incurious are the people of Naples, that I have been informed since my residence in this city, that there never was but one Neapolitan gentleman upon the top of the mountain; and he, being an intimate acquaintance of the English, was, in a manner, compelled to undertake that arduous task. Neither were their Sicilian Majesties ever any farther than the valley between Vesuvius and Somma, to see a most beautiful cascade of fire fall into a hollow way, more than fifty feet deep, to which curious phenomenon Sir William Hamilton had the honour of conducting them, in the night of the 11th of May, 1771.

As introductory to the three towns, Herculaneum, Pompeia, and Stabia, it would not be amiss to give some account of the dreadful eruption of Mount Vesuvius which caused their destruction.

It burst out, all at once, on the 23d of August, of the Christian æra 79, between one
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and two in the afternoon, and compleatly overwhelmed the above towns; the former by an inundation of hot mud, between sixty and eighty feet high; and the two latter with showers of ashes, pumice, and other volcanic substances, in some places near twenty feet in height.

I ought to mention that Herculaneum is five miles, Pompeia seven, and Stabia ten miles distant from the mouth of the volcano.

This eruption so altered the face of this part of the country, that it was not till within this century that any discoveries were made even at Herculaneum, which was considerably prior to the other two towns.

It is well known that Tacitus requested of Pliny the younger, a succinct and accurate account of his uncle's death, in order that it might be inserted in his history. I think I cannot, in this place, do better than refer the reader to Pliny's Answer, as translated by the ingenious Mr. Melmouth.

We see, in the course of this letter, that Pliny and his mother, who were left at Misenum,

num, were obliged to shake their cloaths continually, to disengage themselves from the vast quantities of ashes which fell very plentifully all round them. Misenum is thirteen English miles distant from the shore underneath Vesuvius; and from the shore to the mouth of the volcano is about seven more: so we may fairly say, that they were twenty miles distant from the burning Crater.

Now if the eruption was so dreadful at that distance, we may form some idea of the horrible situation of those towns which were on the same shore with the mountain.

It is recorded, that the ashes of this eruption were carried in the air into Africa, Egypt, and Syria.

This dreadful eruption darkened the sun for two or three days, which occasions Pliny to say, that "some people imagined that the last and eternal night was arrived, which was to destroy both the gods and the world together." But, lest I should throw too deep a gloom on your imagination, by dwelling on this awful and tremendous subject, I shall add nothing more than that I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XV.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My dear friend,

HERCULANEUM lays underneath the present town of Portici, about four miles distant from Naples, where the King has a beautiful palace, and perhaps the most valuable museum in the world ; but of this I shall speak in its proper place.

Many openings have, at different times, been made at Herculaneum, and filled up again by royal authority ; for as the country is subject to earthquakes, it might be of dangerous consequence to suffer the ground to remain open at so great a depth. They only shew, now, the plan of a theatre, to which you are obliged to descend, about sixty feet underground, which is extremely disagreeable. It appears large and well contrived. The seats are all of stone, and raised one above another for the conveniency of seeing. The orchestra

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is placed precisely in the same manner as in modern theatres; and the stage, which I believe was originally paved in a handsome manner, is the same.

I was only shewn from a distance the spot where Stabia stood; all the openings into that town having been long since filled up, for the reason I mentioned. But Pompeia is curious beyond conception, and being laid entirely open to the sky, it makes it very pleasant and agreeable for strangers, to reconnoitre the different parts.

Before I begin my description, it will be necessary to mention a few particulars, in order to give you as clear an idea as I can of this great curiosity.

We must observe, in the first place, that this town is chiefly in ruins, no one house being compleat; and yet it appears better than a town after it has been burnt, tho' somewhat like it; for the immense weight of the volcanic matter, of course, broke in all the roofs, which appear to have been arched in many of the principal houses. Pieces of stone staircases and strong arched cellars, also wash-houses

houses and baths that were on a level with the cellars, are many of them as perfect as if they had been built only twenty years. We should also observe, there is no furniture here; for the moment any utensil is discovered, it is conveyed to the museum at Portici.

I must make one observation more. The street, (for there is but one regular street dug out) alleys, dwelling-houses, and even temples, are so extremely small, that Pompeia may justly be termed a town in miniature; which makes me imagine, it either was not a place of much consequence, or, what is more likely, that they have not as yet penetrated into the heart of the town.

Before we enter Pompeia, it will not be amiss to pay a little attention to a nobleman's villa (discovered about three or four years ago) which is exactly in the way thither. The house appears large, and contains many apartments; but in so ruinous a state, that I think no clear judgment can be formed of its original beauty. But the garden ground, containing a pretty fish-pond in the middle, and furrounded by a regular colonnade (of about eighty feet square) is tolerably perfect. On

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the top of this colonnade was a terrace, which, communicating with the first story, was very convenient for the family to enjoy the air, and the prospect, without descending into the garden. So the terrace was at the top; under that a handsome, regular colonnade, supported by well-proportioned columns, which served as a pleasant retreat in the heat of the day; and underneath are cellars, in excellent preservation. Here it was the family (consisting of eight persons) sought for an asylum. Poor creatures! thinking they were able to withstand the showers of pumice, ashes, &c. they fixed upon the cellar as the place of the greatest strength and security. But how were they disappointed, when they found hot liquid mud rushing in at every opening! Their situation is better conceived than expressed. It appears from many circumstances, that people had time to consult on their danger, and to form regular plans for their security. This unfortunate family guarded against every danger but that by which they perished, viz. suffocation. They considered the cellar as the strongest place belonging to a house; and, lest the weight of the volcanic matter should break in the vaulting, or the frequent shocks of earthquakes (which attended this horrid eruption) endanger

endanger the building, they had (as I am credibly informed) introduced a frame of wood for their greater security. When this villa was dug out, the wood was perished; but the impression being left in the mud, the planks and upright pieces could easily be traced. Here it was the print of a woman's breast was found, with some fine linen she wore round her neck, and some ornaments of gold, which sufficiently proves the consequence of this family. All the eight skeletons were found, just within the cellar door, in a position as if they had been struggling to get out. I saw their skulls, and was astonished to find that human bones would last seventeen hundred years.

I ought to mention, that in the cellar were a great number of amphora, in which the Ancients kept their wine. They are of baked earth, and precisely in the same position as when the calamity happened; viz. inclined against the wall but stuck so fast, that I was not able to move one of them. They are entirely full of earth.

About half a mile from this villa, (passing over vineyards, &c. beneath which is that part

of the town not as yet dug out) you come to the sepulchral monuments of Pompeia, which are placed on each side of the road leading to one of the gateways of the town.

We looked into one of the sepulchres, and saw some niches for urns: but what struck me the most was, some frightful hollow masks of baked earth, which were formerly lit up to the *manes* of the dead.

In all ages of the world, mankind have had a strange notion of death: indeed some of the Ancients, by the light of nature, discovered that they were possessed of an immortal part, the soul; but they were not clear in their conjectures, and were frequently lost in doubt and perplexity. We Christians ought to think ourselves extremely happy, that this subject has been laid open to us in the Gospel, and effectually cleared up in the 15th chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, which is very judiciously chosen by the Church of England, as the lesson for the funeral service.

We entered Pompeia at the lower end, near the barracks. But, as I think it will give you
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a better idea of the situation of the street, houses, &c. to go in at this entrance, I prefer it to the farther part of the town, which would cause confusion, as the buildings are not so regular.

It was a prevailing custom among the Ancients, to place the sepulchral monuments on each side the public road, as a memento to travellers of their mortality.

We are now entering Pompeia. Part of the gateway still remains on the right side. The street, as I observed before, is very narrow; and the houses in general small. Immediately within the gate, on the right hand, was the inn; it is clearly to be traced by the gate-way, yard, the number of little apartments, &c. The next building was, incontestibly, a house of ill fame; some skeletons were also found here. A surgeon inhabited the next house, as a great number of surgical instruments were found underneath the marble counter, which remains entire to this day. On the opposite side of the way lived another surgeon, as another set of instruments were found. Farther on, is a druggist's shop, clearly to be traced, with a flue in one corner. Near this is an oil shop, with earthen pots placed in the

ground to contain the same. Not far from the barracks is but an indifferent house, the apartments being very small and crowded with other buildings; which is supposed to have been the habitation of a physician, as a statue in baked earth, representing *Æsculapius*, was found in one corner of the parlour. So *Pompeia* seems to have been well provided with medical assistance.

The pavement of the street is formed of durable stone, but in some places a little out of repair. The impression of wheel carriages is clearly to be traced from one end to the other. There is also a narrow footway on each side. I forbear giving a particular description of the little lanes and alleys, as I think it unnecessary. The temple of *Isis* stands rather behind the street, and is so extremely small, that it appears quite like a plaything: indeed models are making of it, which will be sent to all parts of Europe. I observed three or four little stucco altars, with their corners somewhat raised. The temple itself is covered with a sort of stucco, and I am happy to say, a very considerable part remains. On the left hand, before you ascend to the *sanctum sanctorum*, is a pretty little apartment for the ablution of the

the priest, just room enough for him to turn round. I omitted to mention, that there were some ashes remaining on one of the altars.

Immediately behind the temple is the refectory of the priests, in which are to be seen, on the floor, in mosaic, the names of those pious people who contributed towards the repair of the temple, which (as well as a considerable part of the town) was much damaged by an earthquake, seventeen years before the dreadful eruption of the mountain, which entirely overwhelmed the whole.

There were two theatres at Pompéia, and both pretty close together; one is cleared, but the other still remains buried under volcanic substance. That which is dug out appears, in every respect, to be well contrived for the conveniency of the spectator, the seats being raised one above the other. Just without the theatre were some conveniencies, which, tho' highly proper, yet shall be nameless.

I observed in the cellars of many of the private houses, some skulls, which undoubtedly belonged to people who imagined they could withstand the eruption, and ran there for security.

Poor wretches! little did they think it was certain death to continue in their habitations.

The houses of the better sort of people had generally a little open court on the inside, with a square fountain in the middle.

We are now come to the barracks for the soldiers; it is a beautiful square, surrounded by a regular colonnade, tho' the middle part is not as yet cleared out. The apartments are very small, and seem to have had no light in them; but Mr. Clark observed, the windows were over the entrance. In one of these apartments were found four skeletons, with their feet made fast in iron stocks. God knows what crime they had committed; but we may reasonably suppose, they never would have been deprived of their liberty had they not deserved it. As the inhabitants were all involved in the same common calamity, every one was to shift for himself; and these poor wretches, being confined, no one thought of them, and so they perished. I saw their skulls.

On one of the pillars of the colonnade, which is covered with a sort of stucco, is a rough sketch, with a knife or some weapon,
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of a Roman soldier fighting, and really not ill executed. The date is underneath, but I do not recollect it.

I hinted just now, that it plainly appeared, from many circumstances, that there was time for the inhabitants to arrange their property in some degree, and settle plans for their security. My friend, Mr. Byres, told me, that every sort of furniture that had been found at Pompeia, was found piled up in the hall, ready to be carried off at a minute's warning, when they should find opportunity so to do. He also observed, that many perished through their own imprudence, as some skeletons were found running back again.

A few years ago this gentleman was a spectator of a skeleton being dug out in the street, laying at length; he had under one hand a purse, which, tho' greatly decayed, appeared to be leather, in which were about fifty gold coins; and the key of his house grasped hard in the other. Poor fellow! he was running away as fast as he could, with perhaps all the property he had in the world, but the repeated showers of volcanic matter, and very probably
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a torrent of mud at the same time, entirely overwhelmed him.*

Our Cicerone, Mr. Clark, mentioned that about four or five years ago, he was at Pompeia, and standing by the workmen when they cleared a cellar, and behold! a skeleton was found with a pick axe laying near him. He had been endeavouring to beat his way through the wall, but all in vain: however, he had made a considerable impression in the brick-work.

A skeleton of an officer of distinction, with a breast-plate of silver, and also the skeleton of his horse, were found in the square of the barracks. It is supposed he was endeavouring to save himself, but was too late.

I am, &c.

* I believe this skeleton was running from the nobleman's villa, of which, very probably, he was the proprietor.

Sir William Hamilton observes, that the skulls of some of the skeletons found in the streets, had been evidently fractured by the fall of the stones; and that some of the fragments of lava and cinders that covered this unfortunate town, actually weighed eight pounds.

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LETTER XVI.

NAPLES, April, 1785.

My dear friend,

I AM now going to introduce you to one of the finest museums in the world. No Monarch on earth can boast of so compleat a collection of antiquities as his Sicilian Majesty. In this collection there can be no deception; no imposition; there can be nothing spurious here; every thing is genuine and original.

It is worth no one's while to introduce things which were not dug out of one of the before-mentioned towns, as many things that were, have actually been rejected for want of room.

I paid two visits to this museum, in order to have it in my power to take a few notes, in which I was assisted by my friend Mr. Clark, much against the inclination of the guide, who
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told us, it was contrary to the rules, to suffer any gentleman to make memorandums.

The reason for this prohibition, was on account of a publication in the Italian language, nearly finished, giving a circumstantial account of the contents of the museum; tho' that precaution was unnecessary, because there had been a publication of this kind twenty-eight years before.

The King of Naples's Palace at Portici is a neat, elegant building, and delightfully situated near the sea. Under the piazza, on the right side, is a fine equestrian statue of white marble, representing M. Nonius Balbus, Proconsul of Herculaneum, which was found in the theatre of that town. On the opposite side, is one of his son, a lad about fifteen years of age, both wonderfully well executed.

In the court, before you ascend to the museum, you see, among a variety of things, other statues of M. Nonius Balbus, his wife, &c. He appears to have been a man of great consequence, as most of the fragments of inscriptions make very honourable mention of him.

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M. Nonius Balbus was at the head of all public affairs. There are besides, in this court, weights, pedestals, corn mills, an olive mill, a bas relief of a triremis, fountains, water pipes, and cocks of bronze; a bronze horse in the center; and other fragments; a glirium for dormice, &c. &c.

On the staircase are several bronze statues.

Chamber the first contains the sacred instruments for the sacrifices; such as altars, tripods, pateras, prefericulum, knives for slaying the victims, probes for examining their entrails, &c. &c.

I ought to observe, that the mosaic pavements of these apartments have been brought from the before-mentioned towns; they are the most beautiful patterns ever seen.

Chamber the second contains, in the center of the room, a fine large bronze vase for the aqua lustralis, an amazing quantity of bronze lamps with whimsical devices, (among which I observed a portable lamp, and one for burning in a bed-chamber, with a small cover full of little holes) bells for cattle, compasses, cestus, fishing

fishing hooks, metallic mirrors, surgical instruments, (among which was a catheter and small syringe) also musical instruments, such as the syrinx, or flute of several tubes, made of bone, and which generally accompanies the god Pan and the Satyrs; the crotali, which are of brass, and not unlike little plates; the method of playing them, is by striking the one against the other; from whence comes the idea of sounding brass.

The fistrum, the tibiæ or double lute, which is made of metal, the tripods, and all the instruments for sacrificing, are of surprizing execution and elegance; also locks, keys, hinges, bolts, amulets, priapi, discus, ivory tessere, pills, plaisters, with a variety of moulds, lamps, &c. in baked earth.

Chamber the third. Bathing instruments in bronze, with all the apparatus used in that operation; agricultural instruments of iron, among which were spades, houghs, rakes, grub axes, &c. &c. They hardly differ from the modern instruments of the same kind. Also a whetstone, scrolls, tablets, inkholders, a reed pen, (the stylus pointed at one end, and flat at the other) glass, chrystal, paste, &c.

Chamber

Chamber the fourth. Liquid and dry measures; among the latter I observed one, that had a contrivance to prevent cheating; the Roman foot, a series of bronze, lead and marble weights, balances, steelyards, sun-dials, &c. &c.

Chamber the fifth. Busts of bronze and marble, ivory toilet boxes, tooth picks, ear pickers, button moulds, spindles, spoons, hair pins, &c. of ivory; the device of the pins generally Venus and Cupid; a thimble, shoe heels, toys for children, fragments of vases, &c. of bronze; also a wooden comb, small ivory tickets for the play, one with Æschylus marked on it, and all regularly numbered, that the different possessors might know where they were to sit, in order to prevent disputes; for there were little points of precedence to be settled in those days as well as the present age; a number of dice, made precisely in the same manner as at present; and what is very extraordinary, they had the method of loading them with lead, for the purpose of cheating; and a piece of lead remains in one of the dice to this day: it is also worthy of note, that the numbers on the opposite sides amount to seven, exactly the same as at present—six and one, five and two, four and

and three. This room is the largest, and the mosaic pavement the most elegant in the museum.

Chamber the sixth. A great variety of bronze candlesticks, most elegantly wrought; also three calidarii, &c. Adjoining to this room is a small apartment, which is an exact model of a kitchen at Pompeia, filled with kitchen utensils; such as pots, pans, boilers, fish kettles, sauce pans, moulds for paste and ices, too numerous to particularize. The kitchen furniture of the Ancients differed very little from that of the Moderns.

Chamber the eighth contains a number of beautiful candlesticks in bronze.

Chamber the ninth. A large marble vase, with a bas relief, representing a Bacchanalia; a statue of Isis, two wrestlers in bronze, marble busts, &c.

Chamber the tenth. Marble vases, fountains, and busts; also two statues of Æsculapius and Egæa, of baked earth. These two last statues were found in a private house at Pompeia; which, as I hinted before, gives reason to suppose it was the habitation of a physician.

Chamber

Chamber the eleventh. Lace made of gold wire, without silk; a chrystal box, full of rouge, in excellent preservation; gold leaf, gold drapey, cloth of Tyrian purple, soles of shoes made of cords, amber, pitch, wax, cord, nets, &c. colours for painting, in wonderful preservation; eatables, such as raisins, walnuts, locusts, eggs, barley, figs, pines, lentils, pears, dates, beans, wheat; also two small loaves of bread, quite become a charcoal, tho' it is plainly discoverable to have been bread; the maker's name, in Greek, appears on both. I ought to mention, that all these eatables, except the two loaves, were found in the refectory of the priests behind the temple of Isis at Pompeia; an amphora, with the consular date upon it; congealed wine; silver wine strainers, neat beyond description; a bronze statue of a drunken faun; two curule chairs of bronze; gold and bronze metals; intaglios and cameos; gold and silver utensils, such as spoons, ear rings, neck laces, bracelets, arm rings; also the bull aurea, worn by the nobility; cups, vases, hair pins, sun dials, &c. &c. &c.

Chamber the twelfth. Whole shelves of bronze and marble busts, some of them known portraits, others imaginary; household gods,

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** put these by the Queen of Naples.*

Alexander and Bucephalus; an Equestrian figure of an Amazon, ivory fragments, &c. &c.

Chamber the thirteenth. Mosaic pictures, small figures and bas reliefs in marble, an Etruscan marble statue of Diana, with painted drapery. In the middle of the room is a bronze statue of a sleeping faun.

Chamber the fourteenth. A capital bronze statue of Mercury, figure as a lamp, bronze vase for the victor Gladiators, two bronze stags, a basalte table, &c.

Chamber the fifteenth. Bronze armour, such as helmets, shields, shoulder and knee pieces, swords, bits for horses, fragments of inscriptions, pieces of painting representing armour, &c.

Chamber the sixteenth. The identical stocks of iron in which the feet of the four Roman soldiers were found fastened, in the barracks at Pompeia; the impression of the mouldings of a wooden beam in mud; also a lady's skull, found in the cellar of the nobleman's villa; together with the impression of her breasts in mud. By looking very intently on the skull,

one

one may just discern the colour of her hair.—
Wonderful indeed, at the distance of upwards
 of seventeen hundred years.

Chamber the seventeenth contains nothing
 more than a bronze tripod supported by three
 satyrs, of surprizing execution and elegance,
 but shamefully indecent, *for which reason it is*
always kept covered.

The following deserves particular attention:
 four scrolls of the ancient papyrus, taken promiscuously out of a large heap; prove to be the production of the same author, *Philodemus*; the subjects are as follow—one on morality, another endeavouring to prove music was hurtful to society, and two on rhetoric. Some ingenious people have lately discovered a method (with incredible labour and pains) to unroll them and read the Greek.

In one of the chambers, is a copper plate, which proves to be a certificate for one of the Roman sailors, which entitled him and his family to certain privileges. It appeared by the certificate, that he had served at Misenum.

Besides all this, there are many apartments

filled with fresco paintings, which are extremely curious. The elegance of the dancing figures exceed all belief. A great number of views of porticos, colonnades, theatres, &c. the perspective is extremely well executed. A number of historical subjects such as the Centaur, Chiron teaching Achilles to play on the lyre. For a particular account of these fresco paintings, see a publication, in French, entitled "*Observations sur les Antiquites d'Herculaneum, Avec quelques Reflexions sur la Peinture & la Sculpture des Anciens, &c.*"

It is well known how Herculaneum came to be discovered in the beginning of this century; but as the discovery of Pompeia is not so generally known, I shall say a few words on that subject.

By what I can learn, Pompeia was discovered by some peasants, who were digging holes to plant vines, about twenty-five years ago. The figure of Isis not being found with the temple, gives room to conjecture, that the people of the country had dug it up; and privately sold it, before the Court of Naples took the affair into hand.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

NAPLES, May, 1785.

My dear friend,

SOON after this, we made an excursion to the magnificent palace of Cazerta, which is most delightfully situated about sixteen miles from Naples. The building is so immense, that it occupies a space nearly equal to that of St. Peter's Church. It consists of four large quadrangles, and in the center of the building is a noble marble staircase, which leads to the principal apartments, the greater part of which are as yet unfinished. The gardens are to be upon a most extensive plan, and like the palace, will, I think, never be completed. I imagine this to be the largest palace in Europe.

About five miles distance, is the famous aqueduct which supplies the palace with water. It was finished about the year 1767, and consists of three rows of arches one above the other, built in a most extraordinary manner;

H 3

as,

as, in the two upper rows, one may walk from one end to the other, through the piers of the arches. The length of this aqueduct is, I think, considerably more than a quarter of a mile, and the height in the center is two hundred feet. This is the most striking object I have ever seen; and both higher, and of greater extent, than the Pont du Garde near Nîmes.

At the west end of Naples, you come to the cave of Paufilippus and Virgil's tomb; the former is a subterraneous passage cut quite through a mountain, about half a mile in length; the height at the entrance is sixty feet, but as you advance it is considerably lower; its width is from eighteen to twenty feet, and well paved throughout: there are two ventilators on the top, which keep it wholesome, by causing a free circulation of air: it is dreadfully dark about the middle, from whence the entrances (from the length of the cave) appear very small, tho', in fact, they are at least sixty feet high.

As it is a public road, I passed through it very often; but never without shuddering about half way, where the gloom is somewhat terry-

terrifying ; and as I passed through one day in a calash, with my friend Mr. Clark, one of our horses, (luckily not the shaft horse,) who had not been accustomed to pass through the cave, on finding the darkness increase, reared up in a very alarming manner ; but the Calefire, or driver, immediately jumped down from behind, and prevented his doing himself, or the carriage, any injury.

Antiquarians generally attribute this immense work to one Cocceius, a Roman, tho' it was considerably enlarged and repaired by Alphonso I. of Arragon, and again by Don Pedro de Toledo, Vice Roy of Naples.

Seneca complains, that in his time it was darker than night, with clouds of dust, which rendered it almost impassable.

The sepulchral monument of the poet Virgil is situated a good way up the cliff, at the entrance of the cave towards Naples ; it is in the form of a pyramid, hollow on the inside, and contains ten niches for urns, three sloping windows, and some reticulated work ; the whole miserably out of repair.

The Ancients held Virgil's tomb in such high veneration, that they considered it as sacred as a temple, and even performed divine worship in it; and Pliny the younger, in the seventh epistle of his third book, assures us that Silius Italicus frequently visited it for that purpose. More than this, Martial says, he afterwards purchased the very land on which it stood, called Patuleo; as also Cicero's villa, in the same neighbourhood.

The country from Naples to Puzzoli is really beautiful; and after you have advanced a little way, you have a good view of the island of Nisita, a delightful spot, where Marcus Brutus had a villa, of which frequent mention is made by Cicero and Pliny. As you advance a little farther on the same road, you pass by a prodigious quantity of solid lava, formerly thrown out of the Solfaterra when a volcano.

Puzzoli is situated on the margin of a small bay; at present it is but an inconsiderable place; but was, in the time of the Romans, a city of great extent and trade, as appears by the many vestiges of ruins which are still to be traced. The ancient name of this place was Puteoli, mentioned in the thirteenth and fourteenth

teenth verses of the twenty-eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, as the port where St. Paul and the other prisoners put in, in their way to Rome, after their dreadful shipwreck:— Verse 13. “*And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Regium: and after one day, the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli.*—14. *Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days; and so we went toward Rome.*”

There are many things worthy note in this place. I shall begin with the magnificent ruins of the temple of Jupiter Serapis,* as I viewed them the first. It was partly cleared out by the present King of Spain, before which it was buried thirty feet deep. It consists of a spacious outer portico, supported by a colonnade of granite columns; behind which are the apartments for the priests, also chambers for the ablutions, &c. In the center of the court was a circular temple for the sacrifices, sup-

* That is, Jupiter of the Egyptians. Serapis is the same as Apis, the son of Jupiter and Niobe, and King of the Argives; who, quitting his own kingdom and going into Egypt, was, after his death, worshipped there under the shape of an ox, in token of his having taught the Egyptians the art of husbandry.

supported by sixteen columns, of the Corinthian order, and chiefly of African marble. In the front of the inner temple, which still continues buried, there remains three immense columns of Cipolite marble, of about fifty feet in height. There are also a great number of fragments on the ground, such as capitols, pieces of the entablature, &c. The pavement was entirely of marble, and the whole encrusted with the same.

The iron rings to which the victims were fastened were visible to every observer.

It is greatly to be lamented, that no one has as yet been permitted to measure this temple. Mr. Clark (who has made one or two unsuccessful attempts for that purpose) has taken the dimensions of all the other temples mentioned in these letters, and very politely delivered them to me. I ought to add, that this judicious antiquarian is of opinion, from the appearance of the different parts of this ruined edifice, that it comes nearer, in its proportions, to Solomon's Temple, than any thing of the kind he has ever seen.

Farther up the hill you see the extensive remains

remains of the temple of Neptune, who, without doubt, was held in great veneration by the inhabitants, as it was a sea-port town. It was 285 feet in length, and 215 in breadth, portico included; its walls are about 40 feet high, and, in some places, 12 thick.

Not far from this are the ruins of the temple of Diana, of a quadrangular form without, and circular within; it is 50 feet diameter; thickness of the wall included, 62; opposite angles 88.

The present cathedral was also a temple of Jupiter, built by Calphurnius, in honour of Augustus.

There is also belonging to Puzzoli, the remains of an amphitheatre, a considerable part of which is still perfect.

Augustus, when on an excursion for the benefit of his health, was invited by the inhabitants to see the public games in honour of Vulcan; and disliking the order in which the people were placed, he made a new arrangement, and separated the men from the women. He ordered that those of senatorial rank

rank only, should sit in the first row; their sons, dressed in purple, in the second; the school-masters, with their disciples, in the third; those of the military line in the fourth; and the Plebæians in the other seats:—that in the opposite part, the Prætor, with the vestal virgins, should sit in the first row; in the second, the wives and female relations of the Senators; and the rest of the women in the other rows.

Here they shew you a small chapel, dedicated to St. Januarius, because, it is said, he was exposed to the wild beasts, in this amphitheatre, under the reign of Dioclesian.

In that part of the town called La Piazza, is placed a square pedestal of fine marble, found in the neighbourhood in 1693; each side has a bas relief, and you may discern fourteen figures, by which were represented the fourteen cities of Asia; the names are underneath; it is inscribed to Tiberius, in gratitude for his beneficence towards them, after a prodigious desolation caused by an earthquake.

Not far from this place is a fine senatorial statue of the Flavian family; the head and arms are modern, but the drapery is admirably cast.

Here

Here you see the ancient Mole, which extended a considerable way into the sea; it is supposed to have been originally built by the Cumæans; it formerly consisted of twenty-four arches, supported by twenty-five piers. Pliny says, that the Pharos stood upon the farther end. Of these piers only fourteen now exist, which, however, extend 1200 feet from the shore. It was thoroughly repaired by Antoninus Pius, as appears by a Latin inscription found buried in the sea below it. Caligula's famous bridge of boats was fastened to the extremity of this mole.

It was near this city that the Academia of Cicero stood. It appears from the ruins to have been very extensive.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

NAPLES, May, 1785.

My dear friend,

THE sepulchral monuments of the ancient Puteoli stand in the place called Campagna, and extend as far as *San Vito*, which is two miles distant: hence some idea of the population and size of the town may be formed.

I peeped into several of the sepulchres, and found them very neatly contrived; with a number of little niches all round, for the reception of the urns. I generally observed there was a large niche in the center, for the head of the family; and where the niches were all of a size, I imagine those sepulchres were erected at the public expence for the common people. They frequently consisted of two stories, well built, and perfectly strong. Many of them are not so far gone, but they may easily be repaired for a little expence.

This

This road was called *Via Consulare*, and led to *Capua*; a good deal of it still remains, and is in tolerable repair.

We now embarked in a boat, and landed by the *Lucrine Lake*, which is now greatly contracted by *Monte Nuovo*. This lake was celebrated by the ancient Poets, as producing excellent oysters.

We now walked round a part of *Monte Nuovo* to the lake of *Avernus*, the ancient *tartarus*, a most delightful situation. We here had a view of the ruins of the temple of *Proserpine*, (whose internal diameter is 118 feet, independent of the niches,) and those dark recesses so properly celebrated for the gloomy sacrifices performed in them. Here the *Sybil* officiated as Priestess of *Hecate* or *Proserpine*; and, according to *Virgil* and *Silius Italicus*, here *Æneas* and *Scipio* sacrificed in person:—the former black bulls, and the latter black sheep. Near the temple are the ruins of baths, and other offices which belonged to it.

The *Sybil's Grotto* is the next thing worthy of note. We entered it by means of torches. It is a most curious place, entirely excavated
out

out of the rock, and is the same cave which Virgil mentions in his sixth book of the *Æneid*.

This lake, from its form, and the materials of which it is composed, has all the appearance of an extinguished volcano.

Agrippa cut a canal of communication between this and the Lucrine Lake, by which means he formed the Julian port, and also corrected the air, which, before, was so pestiferous, that the birds, in endeavouring to fly over, dropt down dead. This lake is a hundred fathoms deep in the center, as measured by Admiral Mann, in the year 1776. By the formation of Monte Nuovo those noxious vapours, so much complained of by the Ancients, are effectually removed; fish now live in the lake, and birds with ease fly over.

We returned back by the same way, and embarked in the same boat; and went to the baths of Nero, now called the *Bagni de Tritoli*. Here you see natural baths of every sort, *cold*, *hot*, and *vapour*. I endeavoured to enter through the passage cut in the rock, into the latter, but the steam was so suffocating, that I was obliged

obliged to make a precipitate retreat. At the end is a boiling pool, to which some people are bold enough to venture; but I think it a dangerous experiment. The guide very civilly boiled me two eggs in the pool.

Near these baths you also see the ruins of Nero's Palace, which appear to be very extensive.

I should be very remiss, if I did not say something of the prospects which surrounded us; but I really want words to do justice to the beauties of the country; for the views on every side, as well towards the land as the sea, are rich beyond conception.

We now embarked for the bay of Baia, at the entrance of which are the remains of Julius Cæsar's villa and baths. Farther on, are the ruins of the beautiful temple of Diana, which was a hundred feet interior diameter, niches exclusive. A considerable part of the building still remains; it was built in the form of a dome, and was formerly encrusted with marble; it is now, like the rest of the antiquities, totally neglected, and greatly injured by time and earthquakes.

Not far from this place is to be seen the temple of Mercury, which is nearly perfect, only shook in many places by frequent earthquakes, to which this country is liable. It was formerly encrusted with marble; but this has been long since removed by the Barbarians, who indeed stripped every thing that came in their way. It is a most elegant building; seventy feet interior diameter, niches exclusive. Besides these ruins, you see a prodigious quantity of decayed buildings, such as the habitations of the priests, places for the ablutions, baths, &c. &c. Indeed it is not to be wondered at, as Baia was the winter residence of many illustrious Romans, who were possessed of magnificent villas. If I do not mistake, the second triumvirate was formed here, which was not of long continuance. It consisted of Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus.

As you advance farther, you see the chamber of Venus, and some stucco compartments still remaining on the walls, which are very curious, but now nearly destroyed, by the guides putting lighted torches to them, in order to shew them to strangers, by which means they are quite black, and running to decay very fast.

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A little way farther, you come to the beautiful remains of the temple of Venus. It is of an octagon form, and was supposed to be built by Julius Cæsar, who certainly erected a temple in this neighbourhood to Venus Genitrix. The interior area is ninety feet, niches exclusive.

We now embarked for Bauli; and, by means of torches, entered a small cave, in which, it is said, Agrippina (Nero's mother) was buried; but the farther part being choaked up, no tomb is to be seen. According to Tacitus, she was privately interred. It was near this spot that she was murdered, by the command of her son, after the contrivance of the vessel with the false bottom had miscarried. Here also stood her villa. There are other sepulchral monuments at Bauli.

The Cento Camerelle, or prisons of Nero, formerly a part of the villa of Hortensius, are very large and extensive.

The Piscina Mirabile, reservoirs for water, are extremely curious and extensive. It is part of the villa of Lucullus.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIX.

NAPLES, May, 1785.

My dear friend,

WE are now come to the Elyfian Fields, which appear to have been a beautiful place formerly, but at present it has not much the air of a paradise, owing to its being totally neglected.

The sepulchral monuments of Misenum, which are placed round the lake, are beautifully described by Virgil. They are now half buried with earth, and make a very mean appearance. I particularly observed one of them was turned into a pig's sty. Could Virgil behold this prostitution to so base a purpose, how would he lament that he had employed his poetical talents in celebrating a monument now converted into a receptacle for the filthiest of all animals!

It is much to be regretted, that the King of
Naples

Naples does not make a cut from this lake to the sea, which is close by, as it would effectually prevent those noxious vapours to which this lake, as indeed are most of the others, liable in summer.

There was formerly a cut of this sort, but it is now nearly choaked up. It is stiled by Virgil the Styx. The lake is called *Mare Mortuum*.

We embarked again, and passed through the port of Misenum, to the ruins of the theatre, which appear very extensive.

There is a passage cut through the rock, quite down to the sea. The dimensions are as follow: the front of the proscenium about 125 feet long; from the proscenium to the center seat, that is, the depth of the area, 50 feet; the breadth of the corridore, 14 feet; the passage from the corridore into the port, about 100 feet.

I observed two immense blocks of marble, beautifully worked, (a part of the entablature,) lying on the ground.

The ruins of the town, the Grotto Tragonara, the immense reservoirs for the use of the town, (not unlike the aisles of a church,) the fish ponds of Lucullus under the promontory, are well worth a traveller's attention.

Pliny the elder had a magnificent villa, and commanded the Roman fleet here in the third year of Titus, during the dreadful eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Returned to Pouzzoli, and from thence to Naples. I must again mention that the views of the country were most beautiful.

Next day, after a most delightful ride, we arrived at the *Lago d' Agnano*, an enchanting spot, which has all the appearance of an extinguished volcano.

The steam baths of St. Germano, and the remains of a villa of Lucullus, from whence he cut a canal of communication to the sea, are objects well worth attention.

I had not entered the baths above six yards, before I fell into a profuse sweat, owing to the sulphureous vapours which proceeded from the

the earth: they are good for the gout, venereal disease, weakneses, &c. &c. These baths have been considerably enlarged and repaired by a Bishop of St. Germano.

On the banks of the lake is a small cave called *Grotto del Cane*, from the experiment usually tried on dogs to satisfy the curiosity of strangers, which is, to make the dog hold his nose in the vapour, and in a few minutes he loses all signs of life. I payed for the experiment to be performed before me; but I obliged the guide to take the animal into the open air before he was quite gone, and he soon recovered. The vapour does not rise quite a foot from the ground. It has the same effect upon men, if they stoop so low; and a lighted torch dipped into it, instantly goes out. This cave is constantly kept locked up, lest some weary traveller should get in, in order to spend the night, and be suffocated.

The *Pisciarelli*, or rivulet of boiling water impregnated with allum, which runs from the declivity of the *Solfaterra*, (white cliffs of volcanic matter, decomposed by the vitriolic acid, &c.) is very extraordinary. I put my

hand into it, and it had exactly the same effect as boiling water over a large fire.

A little way from this, Mr. Clark called my attention to a cavity in the side of the mountain, where I could plainly hear the hollow noise of water boiling a considerable depth underground.

We now viewed Astroni, evidently the crater of an extinguished volcano, which is near five miles in circumference at the summit, and resembles a vast amphitheatre, shelving down along the sides, with a proportionable area at the bottom. The interior parts are almost entirely covered with wood. Upon those precipices where no soil can grow, nothing is visible but *lava*, *scoria*, *pumice*, and other volcanic substances. It is one of the most beautiful spots I ever beheld, and now converted into a royal hunting park.

Next day, our usual good weather attending us, we viewed *Solfaterra* in perfection. This, like Vesuvius was formerly an active volcano; but, probably, when the materials that supported its cone, were so far consumed that it was no longer able to sustain its own weight,

weight, the top gave way, and formed the vast plain below, which is upwards of twelve hundred feet in length, and a thousand in breadth; which, with the white cliffs around it, constitute what is now called Solfaterra. The eruptions of this volcano are lost in such remote antiquity, that history, I believe, does not specify any particular one. Strabo, in his fifth book, calls it Forum Volcani; and Pliny, *Campagna Phlegræa*: nay, the very name by which the Greek distinguished it, is allusive to the same white cliffs we see to this day. If we consider the intense heat of the place, the noise of boiling waters in caverns below, and the great quantity of hot vapour arising from them, and the white cliffs, it may reasonably be presumed, that the subterraneous fires still continue to burn, and that it has undergone no remarkable change since their days. Hence we have a proof of the slow progress of volcanos.

A tremendous eruption from this once fierce, but now half-extinguished volcano, at an immense distance of time, burst out upon its south side in a torrent of liquid lava (which I have hinted at before) more than a quarter of a mile in breadth, and two hundred feet in depth, which, rushing down into
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the sea, formed a considerable promontory; and the lava that then flowed from it, being of the blue, solid kind, forms at present an excellent quarry, and is worked by slaves, who take from thence the stones with which the streets of Naples are paved, as also those large masses sunk along the shores of Chiaia and the Strada Nuovo, to prevent the violence of the waves from sapping the foundations of the houses.

In many parts of Solfaterra, a stone of about twenty pounds weight, thrown in a perpendicular direction, with only the force of a man, shakes the plain very sensibly, and makes a noise like the report of distant thunder. Hence we might infer, that the plain itself is only a thin incrustation over the vast cavity below.

In many parts of the plain, sal ammoniac is produced, in considerable quantities, by the following simple operation:—Holes are dug about eight or ten feet deep, (for they cannot venture deeper, lest the hot steam from the boiling waters below should suffocate the workmen;) over these holes pieces of tiles are laid, and the steam, in its passage through
their

their spaces, adhering to them, forms the sal ammoniac, which is carefully scraped off into water, and the latter being exhaled by evaporation, leaves the salt behind. By different processes, that are equally simple, allum, sulphur, *vitriol*, and *nitre*, are likewise produced. I put my foot into the steam, and my buckles (which were of silver) instantly became of a deep yellow; upon which, my friend Mr. Clark congratulated me on my good fortune, and the beneficial transmutation I had made, by my silver buckles being converted into gold.

That there is a connection between the subterraneous fires of this volcano and Mount Vesuvius, I think is very clear; for during the most quiescent seasons of the latter, the smoke and sulphureous exhalations of the former issue forth with a great degree of violence: on the contrary, during the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, Solfaterra generally abates, if not totally subsides, for a time.

I remain, &c.

LET-

LETTER XX.

NAPLES, May, 1785.

My dear friend,

WE are now come to the ancient city of Cumæ, which appears, by the ruins, to have been pretty considerable. Here it was Tarquin the Proud retired. The Arco Felice, so called from its standing in the Campagna Felix, is nothing more than one of the original gateways of the city. The arch is admirably well turned, and in excellent preservation: an ancient aqueduct passes near the top, which brings the water forty miles.

We next took a view of the castle, which appears to have been a strong place. Here did Totilla, King of the Goths, in the middle of the sixth century, deposit the plunder he had taken, as a place of the greatest security.

We now ascended the hill of Cumæ, whereon formerly stood a temple of Apollo; and after that, a Christian church, built of the old ma-
that,

terials, which is totally gone to decay, very small pieces of the walls remaining.

According to Virgil, it was upon this spot that Dædalus first alighted after his flight from Crete, and erected this temple to Apollo, to whom he also consecrated his wings. It was in this temple that Æneas sacrificed to the manes of Misenus; and upon the frieze was represented, in basso relievo, of superb sculpture, the actions of Minos, the loves of Pasiphae, the story of Androgeos, &c.

This spot commands a very extensive prospect—Mons Gaurus, Arco Felice, the island of Capri, the promontory of Misenum, the Acheron, the islands of Procida, Ischia, Ventotiene, &c. Monte Circello, Greta, Mondragone, Lugo, and Torre di Patria, built upon the ruins of Linternum, whither Scipio Africanus retired and died. This great man was so ill requited for his eminent services by his ungrateful countrymen, that he voluntarily retired to this place, called Torre di Patria, on account of the latter word only remaining on the monumental inscription, which originally stood as follows:—

Ingrata Patria ne quidem ossa mea habes.

Every

Every author who has written of this spot, says, that after the destruction of Linternum, by the Vandalls, in the year 455, they erected the present tower upon the site of the original sepulchre.

I returned to the baths and grotto of the the Cumæan Sybil, under the castle. This is, probably, one of the hundred entries alluded to by Virgil, and is considerably larger than the cave of Paufilippo. It extended from Cumæ to the Avernus; but as a great part is choaked up with rubbish, only about one hundred feet are passable on this side. It was originally lined with reticulated work, and plaistered over. What the intention of these subterraneous passages were I cannot find out; but I am well assured, there were some diabolical tricks played off here by the Priests of those days. Part of them were quarries, and they chose to work out the stone in regular alleys. The whole extent of these caverns is perhaps four miles.

The King of Naples has lately formed a design to drain the ancient Tartarus; or, in other words, the Lake of Avernus; one of the prettiest places I ever saw; by which means
he

he purposes conveying the water through a considerable part of the Sybil's Cave, which will have a very pretty effect.

The amphitheatre of Cumæ is the next object worthy notice. Its elliptic form, the exterior wall, the declivity for the seats, and the area, are still visible; tho' now filled with earth, and converted into a vineyard. It is 368 feet in the greatest diameter, and 312 in the shortest, the seats and exterior wall included; the area is 230 feet long, by 170 broad. In this amphitheatre human bones are frequently dug up, supposed to belong to the gladiators, wrestlers, &c.

Mons Gaurus was incontestibly a volcano; both from the appearance of its crater, as also the volcanic materials of which it is composed. We are informed by the ancient poets, that it was very fertile, and produced excellent wine; but since their days it is become quite barren, for which reason it is now called Monte Barbaro.

Monte Nuovo is the next object which calls our attention. It was thrown up on the 29th of September, 1538. A dreadful volcano

cano burst out upon the banks of the Lucrine, which absorbed two thirds of that lake; swallowed up, or rather buried under showers of volcanic matter, the village of Tripergola, a large hospital, and several scattered houses, with their inhabitants. This horrible explosion was attended with a tremendous noise, and so violent an earthquake, that the neighbouring town of Puzzoli was considerably damaged, and abandoned by its inhabitants for several days. During these convulsions, the sea retired for some hours about a hundred paces, and dead fish were found in large quantities along the shore. After two days, the smoke in some measure subsided; but instead of a fertile plain and a beautiful lake, appeared a rude mountain, (three miles in circuit at the base, a thousand feet in height, and one mile in circumference at its summit,) entirely composed of *lava, scoria, tufa, pumice*, and other volcanic substances.

The form of the crater is perhaps the most perfect of any in this volcanic country, being exactly an inverted cone, almost equal in depth to the perpendicular height of the mountain. Twenty people, imprudently looking into the crater, a few days after the birth of this mountain,

tain, fell victims to their curiosity. The subterraneous fires are not quite extinguished, as smoke and steam still continue to issue from the crevices at the bottom.

I must not forget the islands of *Ischia* and *Procida*. The former was the ancient Inarine, or *Ænaria*, mentioned by Homer. There was a volcano here formerly, but now quite extinguished; however, it is plainly discoverable, by the size and shape of the mountain. There is a town in this island, which, they say, is very populous. It all belongs to the King of Naples.

Procida (a small island not far from the other) is a very pleasant spot; where the King has a beautiful palace, and a noble park, in which partridges and other game are preserved for his amusement.

Beyond these, you have a distant prospect of the islands of *Ventotiene*, *Palmarola*, *St. Stephano*, and *Ponfe*; to the former of which, *Augustus* banished his daughter *Julia*.

I remain, &c.

LETTER XXI.

NAPLES, May, 1785.

My good friend,

I FIND it absolutely necessary for me to quit this magnificent city as soon as possible; for I have lately been attacked with a very extraordinary shortness of breath, which, I imagine, proceeded from some noxious vapours I imbibed, by standing at night in my balcony, to view the flashes of fire at the top of the mountain, and the red hot lava in the valley between Vesuvius and Somma.

My friend frequently warned me of the great danger there was of catching cold; but so delighted was I at this uncommon appearance, that in spite of all his admonitions, I persevered to take a peep at the mountain every evening before I retired to rest: but little did I think, at the time, I should pay so dear for my curiosity.

As

As it may be of essential service to those of my acquaintance, who may hereafter take the same tour, to give some account of the manner in which I was attacked, I shall briefly relate to you the progress of this very disagreeable illness, from which I am now scarcely recovered.

Very luckily, I had finished my course with Mr. Clark, before I found any inconvenience from the air of Naples.

I do not write for the information of the Faculty, but for the benefit of those who may travel after me; for I am well convinced, the medical people of England can form but an imperfect idea of this disorder, which is peculiar to the country, and but little understood by the natives themselves. Indeed, Padre dell Torre, (whose works, you know, I have purchased since my arrival here,) in his admirable History of Vesuvius, treats largely on the disorders of the country; and, in the course of his observations, takes occasion to mention this poisonous exhalation, which the Neapolitans call *Mofete*. It proceeds from the lava, and sometimes attacks the natives, but most commonly strangers.

This ingenious Naturalist calls it a subtle, searching, dangerous vapour, which dries up the active part of the lungs of those who are so unfortunate as to fall in its way.

I was first attacked by an amazing tightness, or rather weight on the right lobe of the lungs, with a trifling shortness of breath at the same time. I contrived to ease myself at night by laying on my left side, as it considerably lessened the weight, which I could conceive, in my own imagination, to be nearly equal to fifty pounds. Soon after this, my breath became extremely oppressed, and the weight on my lungs grew better. Alarmed at this sudden seizure on my respiration, which prevented my laying down in bed, I determined to send for advice; and my Cicerone having previously recommended to me a surgeon in case of illness, I immediately dispatched my servant for him in order to be bled the same evening. He took about eight ounces; and I am sorry to add, it had little or no effect. He afterwards recommended aperient medicines, which in the course of a fortnight nearly set me up. However, I ought to inform you, that the asthma (when most oppressive to my lungs) continued only two days; but it was
some

some time before I could breathe with the same freedom I do at present.

To make a ridiculous comparison, I think I was precisely in the same state as the poor dog, on his being taken out of the Grotto dell Cane. You know, I very humanely obliged the guide to carry him into the open air before he was quite gone; but I observed his breath was amazingly oppressed for several minutes after the experiment. But be this as it may, I think it would not be amiss to quote our ingenious countryman Sir William Hamilton, who has made mention of this vapour in one of his letters to the Royal Society.

“ The nature of the noxious vapours called
 “ here *Mofete*, that are usually set in motion
 “ by an eruption of the volcano, and are then
 “ manifest in the wells and subterraneous
 “ parts of its neighbourhood, seem likewise to
 “ be little understood. From some experi-
 “ ments very lately made by the ingenious
 “ Dr. Nooth, on the *Mofete* of the Grotto dell
 “ Cane, it appears, that all its known qualities
 “ and effects correspond with those attributed
 “ to fixed air. Just before the eruption of
 “ 1767, a vapour of this kind broke into the

“ King’s Chapel at Portici, by which a servant,
 “ opening the door of it, was struck down.
 “ About the same time, as his Sicilian Majesty
 “ was shooting in a paddock near the palace,
 “ a dog dropped down, as was supposed, in a
 “ fit; a boy going to take him up, dropped
 “ down likewise; a person present suspecting the
 “ accident to have proceeded from a *Mofete*,
 “ immediately dragged them both from the
 “ spot where they lay, in doing which, he was
 “ himself sensible of the vapour. The boy
 “ and the dog soon recovered.

“ His Sicilian Majesty did me the honour
 “ of informing me himself of this accident,
 “ soon after it had happened.

“ I have met with these *Mofete* often, when
 “ I have been making my observations on the
 “ borders of Mount Vesuvius, particularly in
 “ caverns, and once on the Solfaterra. The
 “ vapour affects the nostrils, throats, and
 “ stomach just as the spirit of hartshorn, or
 “ any other strong volatile salts, and would
 “ soon prove fatal, if you did not immediately
 “ remove from it.

“ Under the ancient city of Pompeia, the
 “ *Mofete*

“*Mofete* are very frequent and powerful, so
 “that the excavations that are carrying on
 “there, are often interrupted by them: at all
 “times, *Mofete* are to be met with under an-
 “cient lavas of Vesuvius; particularly those
 “of the great eruption of 1631.

“In Serao’s Account of the Eruption of
 “1737, and in the chapter upon *Mofete*, he
 “has recorded several curious experiments
 “relative to this phænomenon.

“The Canonico Recupero, who (as I men-
 “tioned to you in a former letter) is watching
 “the operations of Mount *Ætna*, has just in-
 “formed me, that a very powerful *Mofete* has
 “lately manifested itself in the neighbourhood
 “of *Ætna*, and that he found, near the spot
 “whence it rises, animals, birds, and insects
 “dead, and the stronger sort of shrubs blasted,
 “whilst the grass and the tenderer plants did
 “not seem to be affected.

“The circumstance of this *Mofete*, added to
 “that of the frequent earthquakes felt lately at
 “Rhegio and Messina, makes it probable that
 “an eruption of Mount *Ætna* is at hand.”

The letter from which I have extracted the foregoing, is dated at Naples, the 16th of October, 1770.

I think I ought not to quit this region of wonders, without saying a little more of the mountain; I therefore beg leave to subjoin a list of the different eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, and other particulars relating to that volcano, which perhaps are not generally known.

The first eruption we have any regular account of, happened the 23d of August, in the Christian æra 79. But Mount Vesuvius was incontestably a volcano before that time, as it is entirely composed of volcanic matter. But the accounts of its eruptions are lost in such remote antiquity, that their memorial is quite forgotten; and Vesuvius once presented a beautiful verdure, intermixed with cottages and trees, which were all effectually destroyed by the above eruption.

The mountain now continued very quiet till the year 203, when another eruption happened.

472. 'Tis said the smoke and ashes of this eruption

eruption were carried in the air as far as Constantinople, and obscured the sun in that part of the world.

1512—1685—993—1036—1049—1306.

No material eruption happened for upwards of three hundred years; when, on the 16th of December, 1631, it burst out all at once, from the side of the mountain, and the lava flowed in seven different channels, laying waste every thing that came in its way, and about ten thousand people lost their lives; as mentioned by a Latin inscription in the neighbourhood. This identical lava is now worked by slaves, and brought to Naples to repair the pavement of the streets.

1660—1682—1694—1701—1704—1712—

1717—1730.

1737. A very considerable eruption.

1751—1754—1760—1762.

From the end of the year 1766 to March 1767.

1771—1775 and 1776.

In

In 1779 there was a very dreadful eruption of the mountain, of which Mr. Clark was an eye witness.

From the 9th of August, 1779, to the 27th of July, 1783, not a spark of fire appeared on Mount Vesuvius, and that day a mouth opened from the bottom of the Crater, which incessantly emitted fire; and on the beginning of November, 1784, it flowed through the gap of the Crater opposite Monte di Somma, and formed a torrent of lava, which continued to run on the 20th of May, 1785, when I left Naples.

The perpendicular height of Mount Vesuvius, as lately settled by the philosophical people, is 1300 yards from the level of the sea, which is 460 yards short of a mile. The Old Crater is about a mile in circumference, and the circumference at the base is thirty miles.

There was no eruption from the great Crater of Vesuvius, from the year 1139 to the dismal eruption of 1631, and the top of the mountain had begun to lose all signs of fire; and it is even said, that wild boars had taken possession of it's Crater.—Vide Sir William Hamilton's Letters.

A LIST

A LIST OF THE ERUPTIONS

OF MOUNT ÆTNA.

Before the Christian æra, four, viz.

3525—3538—3554—3843.

After Christ, twenty-seven have been recorded,
viz.

1175—1285—1321—1323—1329—1408—

1530—1536—1537—1540—1545—1554—

1556—1566—1579—1614—1634—1636—

1643—1669—1682—1689—1692—1702—

1747—1755—1766.

The perpendicular height of Mount Ætna is about 11,600 feet, which is 1,040 feet above two miles.

The Old Crater is two miles and a half in circumference; and the circumference at the base is now discovered to be a hundred and eighty-three miles.

A LIST OF THE DIFFERENT ACTIVE VOLCANOS

Which are known at this time to exist in the world.

I shall set them down as near as I can, according to their magnitude.

Mount *Ætna*, which is generally esteemed the largest; tho' the learned are rather divided about it.

A large volcano in the Andes, in South America.

A tremendous volcano at *Kamschatka*, lately discovered by the Russians.

Mount *Vesuvius*, near *Naples*.

Hecla, in *Iceland*.

Stromboli, one of the *Lipary* islands.

A vol-

A volcano lately risen out of the sea near Iceland.

Solfa Terra, near Naples, which still continues to burn, tho' its fires do not appear.

And the Island of Volcano, near Sicily, which was in eruption a few years ago, according to Sir William Hamilton.

I make no doubt but there are many more in the world, for burning mountains are frequently alluded to in holy writ. I beg leave to quote two passages in the Psalms, which have frequently struck me:—

Psalms civ. verse 32. *"The earth shall tremble at the look of him: If he do but touch the hills, they shall smoke."*

Psalms cxliv. verse 5. *"Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down; touch the mountains, and they shall smoke."*

April 28, 1785. This day, about four in the afternoon, Captain Blanket of the Thetis, an English frigate of thirty-eight guns, which had been in the bay for upwards of a month, drank the health of their Sicilian Majesties, and gave a royal salute.

The 30th of the same month, their Sicilian Majesties embarked in a small fleet for Leghorn, in order to see the battle of the bridge at Pisa. They were attended by the Thetis; and immediately on their sailing, there was a grand discharge of artillery from all the vessels in the bay.

I was at my balcony during both these exhibitions.

The 2d of May, and the two following days, I was nearly distracted with the report of cannons, which were discharged every seven or eight minutes from a wharf near my hotel. It seems they were a present from his Britannic Majesty, brought by Captain Blanket, to the King of Naples. They are on an entire new construction, and consist of twelve pieces of cannon

cannon and eighteen swivels ; the trial of which caused the reports that so much disturbed my quiet.

I hear from good authority, that the King of Naples intends sending in return, a compleat set of china of the Porcelain manufactory, on which will be represented the different views and antiquities of the country.

From the quantity of matter Vesuvius has discharged since November 1784, it is highly probable that some considerable eruption is at hand.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

FLORENCE, June, 1785.

My dear friend,

AGREEABLE to my promise made to you in a former letter, I now sit down to give you a description of this celebrated city.

In my way to Rome, I made so short a stay here, that I could not, with propriety, give any account of a city which I had scarcely seen. But before I enter into a particular detail of the curiosities which this city has to boast of, it may afford some information to future travellers, to give a sketch of the road from Rome, by way of Terni and Perugia, to this place.

I quitted Rome on the 11th of this month, and arrived the same evening at Terni, the distance being sixty miles. On the following day, I visited the famous cascade about five miles from the above mentioned village. The
fall

fall is said to be two hundred feet perpendicular, which is formed by a cut made by the Romans to drain the Velino Lake, and it discharges itself into the Nar. The beauties of this enchanting scene must strike the most careless observer. At Spoleto, there is an aqueduct of immense height; the work of the lower ages. In the midway between Spoleto and Foligno, is the source of the river Clitumnus, with a small temple of Diana, now converted into a chapel. I slept at Perugia the 13th of June, and the following day surveyed the town, and looked into several churches, wherein are to be seen many paintings by Pietro Perugina, Raphael's master. The paintings formerly belonging to the palaces here, have been lately purchased by the English. Between Perugia and Cortona, I passed by the beautiful lake of Trasymene. The famous battle in which Hannibal defeated the Romans, was fought on that side towards Cortona, between the hills and lake. My postillion, when on this spot (willing to impress on my mind, as forcibly as possible, an idea of this memorable defeat) stopped the carriage, and informed me that the lake flowed with blood for three days after the battle.

L

Having

Having given you this short sketch of the road by which I arrived here, it is time for me to conduct you to the gallery, the churches, and palaces with which this city abounds. As to the former, the subject is so copious, that it would far exceed the bounds of a letter, to specify the paintings contained in a single apartment. I shall, however, content myself, and I hope satisfy you, by mentioning two pieces of sculpture, which being both excellent in their kind, deserve particular notice. The first is the famous Venus de Medicis, so justly admired by Connoisseurs for its exquisite symmetry and beautiful proportion. An admirable copy of the Jupiter Serapis is also to be seen in this collection; the original, as I mentioned in a former letter, was dug up by Mr. Hamilton the artist.

As to the numerous paintings and statues collected in this choice repository, I must refer you to an ingenious publication in the French language, entitled "*Description de la Galerie Royale de Florence, par M. François Zacchioli Ferrarois*," which gives a clear and succinct account of the different paintings, statues, medals, &c. preserved here.

The

The churches in this city are extremely magnificent, and contain many pieces of sculpture and paintings, by the most eminent artists.

Florence being the capital of Tuscany, and the place of residence of the Court, it is natural to think that the city should abound with splendid mansions and superb palaces. The Grand Duke lives in great splendor, and enjoys all the appendages of a sovereign prince. His palace is large and spacious, and consists of a variety of apartments, many of which are furnished with paintings by the best masters.

After Naples, in my humble opinion, there is no place where diversions are seen in greater perfection than at Florence. Operas, balls, and plays, very agreeably employ the leisure hours of the numerous inhabitants of this city. The course was more splendid than usual during my stay here, on account of St. John and St. Peter's day, the former being the titular saint of this place.

Figure to yourself some hundreds of equipages, belonging to the Grand Duke, the

Ambassadors, and the nobility, many of them gilt, and all of them finely ornamented, filled with company elegantly dressed, and parading through the streets for two or three miles, and then you will entertain a faint idea of this magnificent cavalcade. It continues for two hours; after which the races commence, which consist of horses without riders; and the scene exhibited on the occasion is truly laughable. This ridiculous diversion being ended, the company proceeded immediately to the opera, and thus concluded the evening.

I must not omit to inform you, that during my stay here, I had an interview with the Representative of the Abdicated Family, who lives here in a retired manner, and takes the title of Count d'Albani. I hope you will not doubt my principles, or suspect my loyalty, when I tell you that he received me with great politeness, and gently touched on the misfortunes of his family. He is sixty-five years of age; and having lived rather freely, his constitution seems to have suffered by that circumstance. He wore a plain suit, with the insignia of the most noble order of the garter, and the cross of St. Andrew of Scotland. He has been some years separated from his wife,

wife, who now resides in Germany. He has lately acknowledged his natural daughter, who lives with him, and is called Dutchess of Albani. Altho' deprived of the advantages and prerogatives annexed to royalty, he still exercises some of its privileges, viz. touching for the king's evil, and making titular bishops.

Give me leave to spare any farther animadversions on this delicate subject; and I hope, when I return to England, you will consider me as well attached to my Sovereign, as if I had never seen the Count d'Albani.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

VENICE, July, 1785.

My good friend,

WE arrived at this curious city on the 7th instant, after being out a whole day and a night, on the river Po, in our way from Ferrara. Our voyage was rendered disagreeable by tremendous claps of thunder and repeated flashes of vivid lightning, which continued with but little intermission for the greatest part of the night. About midnight we reached the Venetian canals; and after crossing two beautiful rivers, we landed safe in this city.

In passing down the Po, the story of Phaeton naturally occurred to us; and tho' we looked with anxious and exploring eyes for the poplar trees into which his weeping sisters were converted, no traces of them are now to be found.

The untimely fate of this unfortunate youth,

youth, suggests a useful and important lesson to those rash and unwary young men, who, priding themselves in their own strength, and presuming too much on their own skill, rush headlong into destruction. — I know you will be apt to say that you did not expect to hear moral lessons from *Venice*.

Before I enter on any description of this city, it will not be amiss to give you a slight sketch of the road by which I came hither.

From Florence I proceeded to Leghorn, a place of great trade, and containing about forty thousand inhabitants, out of which number fifteen thousand are Jews. I made here an acquaintance with an agreeable English gentleman, who lodged in the same hotel, and he being destined to return soon to our native island, we agreed to travel together. But before we quitted this place, we attended the Protestant Chapel, and were introduced to the minister, who is chaplain to the Factory. He informed me, that the emoluments of his appointments were equal to 300*l.* per annum in England. His name is Hall; he is a sensible, worthy man, and is well received by the Catholic clergy.

This is the only city in Italy (Leghorn) where the Protestant religion is publicly tolerated, and where the different sectaries are indulged in their various forms of worship, without the least molestation.

On the Quay I observed the bronze figures of the four slaves, chained to a pedestal, on which is placed a full-length figure of an illustrious prince, by whom they were taken captive on the High Seas for piracy. This story is mentioned by all travel writers, and is so well known, that I trust you will excuse my enlarging any further on the subject.

From Leghorn we returned to Florence ; and, in our road thither, just stopped at Pisa, (a beautiful city,) to view the church, baptistery, and leaning tower, all which are well worthy of notice ; particularly the latter, which is about fifteen feet out of the perpendicular line.

From Florence we passed over a very unpleasant road to Bologna. Great part of the road leads over the Appenine Mountains, which are but little cultivated and very thinly inha-

inhabited.) We travelled seventy-two miles, and scarcely met with a single village.

Bologna is a large and populous town, in the Pope's dominions; it contains several fine palaces and churches, but we had not time to survey them.

Ferrara is also a large city, and is the last in the Pope's territories. Neatness and lightness characterize the architecture generally displayed in this city; and the palaces and churches are as magnificent as any in Italy.

In my next letter I will give you some account of Venice. Adieu for the present; you shall hear from me again soon.

I am your's.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

GENEVA, August, 1785.

My dear friend,

I TOLD you in my last letter, that I would give you an account of Venice when I wrote to you again. This beautiful city is situated on the Lagunes, in the Adriatic Sea, about five miles from the Continent; a situation as extraordinary as any in the known world. When it was originally planned, it was designed as a place of security from the ravages of the Goths, who invaded Italy in the fifth century; soon after which, the foundation of this great city was laid on seventy-two small islands, tho' at present it stands on a much greater number.

The architecture of the churches and palaces is in a magnificent style; the principal edifices are the church and tower of St. Mark, from the top of which Venice has all the appearance of a floating city, being entirely
fur-

surrounded with the sea, and canals running through the streets.

The Arsenal, altho' greatly inferior to the docks of Plymouth and Portsmouth, contains large quantities of naval and warlike stores; and the armoury has many curious weapons and instruments of death, taken in the Venetian wars with the Turks; they are nicely arranged in rows, and have a very pretty effect.

The church and convent of St. George Maggiore forms an island of itself, and in it there is seen a fine painting, which represents the marriage of Cana in Galilee, by Paul Veronese.

The church of the Madona de la Salute (built by a vote of the Senate, on the ceasing of a plague, about one hundred and fifty years ago) contains some excellent pictures by Titian, Tintoretto, Luca Giordano, &c.

St. Roch is appropriated to mercantile business; it consists of a spacious hall, and has some fine paintings in it.

It is difficult to conceive any thing more beau-

beautiful than the Grand Canal. One sees neither carriages nor horses at Venice, persons being conveyed from one end of the town to the other by means of gondolas, except they chuse to walk in the foot ways, which are for the most part narrow and inconvenient; except some spacious quays which have been lately formed.

The day before I left Venice I took an opportunity of seeing the Doge's barge; it is built on a larger scale than the other Venetian vessels, is richly gilt, and ornamented with many curious emblematical figures. In this barge it is that the Doge, attended by a grand cavalcade of the Senate and nobility, goes every year to marry the sea, which ceremony is performed by the Doge's dropping a gold ring into the ocean, at the same time repeating these words, "*Desponsamus te Mare, in signum veri perpetuæ dominii*:"—We espouse thee, "O Sea! in token of our real and perpetual dominion over thee." This ceremony took its rise from Pope Alexander III. in acknowledgment for the assistance granted him by the Venetians.

If you wish to see a more particular account
of

of the government and curiosities contained in this city, permit me to refer you to an ingenious publication in the French language, by Jean Baptiste Albrizzi, which I have found very faithful in the account it gives.

From Venice I proceeded to Padua in a covered boat, and had a most delightful sail up the river Brenta; and on its banks are situated many neat mansions belonging to the nobility, which contribute much to diversify, and enrich the prospect. We arrived at Padua the same evening. This city is large, and the buildings are many of them very ancient. The council hall, which is equal in dimensions to that at Westminster, is a curious piece of architecture; the roof is one entire wooden frame, and supported in the same manner as the theatre at Oxford, without any pillar whatsoever.

After having undergone many revolutions, Padua was taken by the Venetians in 1406.

From Padua we proceeded to Vicenza, and from thence to Verona, which is most agreeable situated, partly on a hill and partly on a plain.

plain. The river Adige divides it. It is fortified after the modern fashion. This city contains, besides splendid churches and cumbersome palaces, a noble amphitheatre, which stands in the market-place, and is built entirely of rough marble. It reflects much credit on the inhabitants of this city, that they spare no expence to keep it in repair. Part only of the exterior wall remains, but the interior part is in excellent preservation, and makes a very magnificent appearance. It is of an oval figure, and its greatest diameter is 233 feet, and the shortest 136. This amphitheatre is considerably larger than that at Nismes. This magnificent structure was erected by the citizens of Verona.

I cannot close my account of this city and amphitheatre, without mentioning an anecdote which happened lately, when the Emperor of Germany visited Italy. The Governor of Verona being apprized of the Emperor's intention of spending a few hours in this city, previously collected the inhabitants of the city and adjacent country, who, dressed in their holiday cloaths, were directed to take their seats in the amphitheatre, and this Majesty,

Majesty, on his entrance there, was agreeably surprized with the appearance of thirty thousand people, who rose up to salute him. The Emperor was so extremely pleased with this well-timed compliment, that he declared he had not received such a mark of attention—no, not in all Italy.

I am yours,

LETTER XXV.

GENEVA, August, 1785.

My dear friend,

FROM Verona we proceeded to Mantua, which has the appearance of a large, well built, and pleasant city; it is the capital of the duchy of that name. It is situated on a beautiful lake, and is well fortified, having a good citadel.

We

We just passed through Cremona in our way to Milan, which is one of the largest and finest cities of Italy, containing about three hundred thousand inhabitants. It is allowed to be of great antiquity, and has a beautiful gothic cathedral, as yet unfinished, tho' greatly advanced. It is five hundred feet in length and two hundred in breadth, and is cased entirely with marble. The treasury is extremely rich, and the church is adorned with many fine paintings and excellent pieces of sculpture. The body of the great and good Charles Barromeus (who had the self-denying merit of refusing the Popedom, and recommending his friend,) is preserved in a subterraneous chapel under the cupola.

Milan is a place of great trade; its chief manufactures are silks, woollen, brocade, and other rich embroidered stuffs, works of steel and chrystal.

We twice attended the grand *Corso* in the evenings, and saw a brilliant appearance of company. About an hour before the carriages arrive, the whole road (which extends at least two miles) is watered by the slaves, who are chained to the water carts for that purpose.

We

We now went about forty miles out of our road, to survey the beautiful lake Maggiore, had a pleasant sail on the same, and landed at the principal island; and after seeing a superb palace, which is built on the island, we returned to Arona, perfectly satisfied with our excursion.

Soon after our return came on a most violent thunder storm, which continued from eleven o'clock in the morning till six in the evening of the following day, with very little intermission. If we had delayed our visit to the lake an hour later, it is probable that our crazy boat would have gone to the bottom.

On the hill near the town of Arona, there is a colossal statue of St. Carlos dressed in his sacerdotal habit, who was a native of this place; its height is about thirty feet.

The river Sazier was so swelled, that we were delayed one night on the road, as the ferry boat could not pass on account of the deluge of rain which flowed down from the mountains. Notwithstanding the country was

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overflowed for several miles with water, it soon subsided, and returned in one night to its proper channels.

After leaving Arona, we pursued our route to Turin; and even from Venice to this city (Turin) the whole road is level and fine.

Turin is the capital of the King of Sardinia's dominions; it was nearly destroyed by the French in 1706, but having been since rebuilt, it is but little inferior to the most elegant cities of Italy.

The King of Sardinia being related to the Stuart family, in consequence of his ancestors having married a daughter of Charles I. is possessed of some fine pictures of that unfortunate Prince and his descendants.

The King of Sardinia's Palace, in my humble opinion, is equal, if not superior, to any other which I have seen during my whole tour, except Caserta.

The grand promenade, or course, without the walls of the city, is generally attended with

with a large appearance of company, consisting of two or three hundred equipages, slowly parading through beautiful avenues of elm trees which extend for some miles.

I delivered my letter of recommendation to the English Minister here, who being absent, I was politely received by the *Chargé des Affaires*.

About three posts from Turin, we came to the village, where our carriage was taken to pieces and put on the backs of mules, in order to be conveyed over the Alps. We preferred horses, which the guides brought us (to a conveyance in small chairs,) considering the former mode of travelling equally safe and agreeable.

We set off about a quarter before three in the afternoon, and ascended a steep rocky road to a considerable height. When we arrived at the top, we passed over a sort of plain about five miles wide. As we passed, we saw mountains on each side of us, considerably higher than our present situation. I several times observed the clouds to float below the tops of the mountains. The night

overtook us before we descended on the other side of the Alps.

There are a few villages dispersed in different parts of the mountain, at which there are inns for the accommodation of travellers.

We occasionally dismounted for the sake of safety; and after descending for a considerable distance, we felt ourselves so fatigued with the exercise, that our patience and perseverance were almost exhausted. We were obliged to walk with great care and circumspection, in order to avoid falling down the most formidable precipices, where a fall from a horse might have been attended with most fatal consequences.

Tho' it was now the 26th of July, the air was cold and bleak, and the darkness coming on, we felt ourselves happy in arriving at a tolerably comfortable inn at the foot of the mountain.

The upper part of the Alps being entirely exposed to the cold blasts of wind, produces but a scanty portion of herbage; sheep, however, are to be seen in some parts; and tho' many

many of them were feeding on craggy precipices, they seemed to have no sense of their danger.

The greater part of the plain being sheltered by the tops of the surrounding mountains, was more verdant, and had the appearance of greater fertility. Half way down the precipices, grew an incredible number of young larches and firs, of every denomination; these, together with the beautiful water-falls which descend from various parts of the mountain, form a very picturesque appearance. That side of the Alps towards Switzerland strikes me as being the most romantic, where the road winds between a chain of stupendous mountains chiefly covered with fir, to the extent of more than a hundred miles.

The expence of crossing the Alps, including horses for three persons, guides, six mules for conveying the carriage, luggage, &c. amounted to thirty-six livres of Piedmont money, exactly thirty-six shillings English.

I had a distant view of one of the Glaciers, covered with everlasting snow.

As

As this is the second letter which I have written from this place, you will think it full time for me to enter on the description of Geneva.

The city of Geneva is delightfully situated on the banks of a fine lake of the same name. The city cannot boast of magnificent churches or splendid palaces, like the cities through which I have lately passed. The simplicity of the buildings corresponds with the sobriety of the inhabitants. It is a place of great trade; and the best means of study, and improvement in languages and sciences, are furnished by the residence of several eminent professors, who dedicate their time and abilities to the education of youth.

We attended divine service at St. Peter's, which is the principal church; it is plain and unadorned, and much resembles the Protestant churches in England.

So great attention is paid to the observation of the sabbath by the Magistrates, that the gates are constantly shut at the time of service. The faction, and tumult, of which we
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heard so much a few years ago, seems now to have entirely subsided, and there is every appearance of internal peace and tranquillity.

The country adjacent is beautifully diversified with views of woods and water; and on one side, it is terminated by a distant prospect of the Alps.

The air here being in the summer more cool and temperate than at Nice, many English families resort hither to enjoy the refreshing breezes from the lake and from the mountains.

I fully intended visiting Lausanne, but fearing an increase of my fatigue, I altered my intentions, and shall pursue my route to England in a direct line from this place,

I am, your's.

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LETTER XXVI.

August, 1785.

My dear friend,

AS I am now setting my face towards England, I begin to experience that satisfaction which every one feels when he is returning to his native country. Such a prejudice in favour of our country cannot indeed be deemed illiberal, as it cleaves to men of the best hearts, and most improved understandings. The Neapolitans possess this national partiality in such an extravagant degree, that they have a proverb among them which implies this sentiment, viz. "See Naples and die." Nor is this prejudice confined to those who enjoy fine climates and unclouded skies; for the inhabitant of Kamschatka, in that desolate region, exults in the pre-eminence he enjoys over others, and blesses God that he was not destined to live in any other part of the globe.

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This predilection was certainly implanted in our breasts for the wisest reasons; and were not its influence universal, the inhabitants of some parts of the earth must necessarily pass their lives in gloom and discontent.

I know you will be inclined to enquire, if one's native country has such charms for every one, what motives can there be strong enough to induce us ever to leave it? To which I shall readily reply—curiosity. Remember, that is a principle so interwoven in the frame and constitution of our nature, that it discovers itself in the earliest stage of our existence, and attends us through every period of it; nor does it quit us till our latest breath. It is this which makes the new-born infant gaze at the bright flame of a taper, or listen to the jingling of a coral. It is this which prompts the hardy adventurer to navigate frozen seas, and travel over inhospitable deserts.

When this curiosity has for its object the improvement of the mind, or the cultivation of the understanding, it is surely highly commendable, and is the source of advantage to the community as well as to the individual.

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Certainly the true end of visiting foreign parts is, to examine their customs, manners, and policies, and to observe in what particulars they excel or come short of our own, to correct the prejudices of a narrow education, and to wear off that stiffness and affectation in our behaviour (which possibly may have been contracted by associating with one nation of men,) by a more free and general intercourse with mankind.

By being totally unacquainted with the Italian language, and by the shortness of my stay in that country, I was unqualified to reap those advantages which a knowledge of the language and a longer residence in the country would have afforded me.

Deprived, however, of some advantages, I hope my tour has not been altogether without profit and improvement; I trust I have enlarged my stock of ideas, and am better furnished with the means of amusing my friends, as well as myself.

Those admired authors of antiquity which I perused in my youth, will now be read with redoubled satisfaction; and by seeing the places

places where they lived, and of which they wrote, I shall learn to acquire a more exquisite relish of their respective beauties and excellencies; and by comparing the natural face of the country with the descriptions they have given us, I shall be enabled to form some judgment, how well the picture agrees with the original.

Nor are, indeed, these the only benefits to be derived from extending our views and varying our situation. Delightful scenes, whether in nature or painting, have a kindly influence on the body as well as the mind; they contribute to amuse the fancy in a splenetic hour, and have a tendency to diffuse a degree of chearfulness over the whole frame. Every thing that is new or uncommon raises a pleasure in the imagination, because it fills the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifies its curiosity, and gives it an idea of which it was not before possessed. Furnished with such resources as these, life passes on in a more agreeable tenor, and we are always enabled to derive entertainment from reflecting on those productions of nature and art which we have beheld. Even our moral conduct, in some measure, depends on our being in possession of such resources; and I cannot help
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adopting the opinion of a very amiable and ingenious writer on this subject, who says that
 “ a man should make the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as possible, that he may
 “ retire into them with safety, and find in them
 “ such a satisfaction as a wise man would not
 “ blush to take.”

As I hope soon to shake you by the hand in England, I shall now close my correspondence. If I have tired you by too minute a detail of uninteresting particulars, or have been too superficial on subjects concerning which you wished for farther information, I must desire you to advert to the apology contained in my first letter. Remember, these letters were written in compliance with your own request; and if your expectations are not answered, on *yourself alone* must be fixed the blame.

I am your's, &c.

FINIS.



